

The Divine Authority of the Christian Religion, and the Natural Deity of Jesus Christ, the Author of it,

Asserted in

Eight SERMONS,

Preached at the

Cathedral CHURCH

OF

St. *PAUL* London,

In the Years 1730, and 1731.

AT THE

LECTURE founded by the Worthy
Lady *MOYER* deceas'd.

By *JOHN BROWNE*, M. A.

*Rector of Beeby in the County of Leicestershire; and
Chaplain to his Royal Highness the Prince
of Wales.*

L O N D O N:

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The Divine Ministry of the Clergy
and the Natural Powers of Man
Containing the Author's Preface

THE
EIGHT SERMONS
PREACHED AT
CATHEDRAL CHURCH

THE principal Reason of my
publishing a Preface to these
Sermons was to lay hold of
the Opportunity which this Publi-
cation of them afforded to make
a few Observations on a Pamphlet
recently published entitled 'The
second Part of the Plan for
Reform &c. the Author of which
appears to be Mr. John Jackson
Rev. of Rotherham in Yorkshire, who
some Time since took the Liberty
to write against the Bishop of Lan-
don's second Pastoral Letter, and to
oppose his Lordship in a Design of
this for W. L. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.



P. H. O. — W. S.

THE
PREFACE.

THE principal Reason of my prefixing *a Preface* to these Sermons, was to lay hold of the Opportunity, which the Publication of them gives me, to make a few Observations on a Pamphlet lately published, entituled, *The Second Part of the Plea for Human Reason*, &c. the Author of which appears to be Mr. *John Jackson* Rector of *Rossington in Yorkshire*; who some Time since took the Liberty to write against the Bishop of *London's Second Pastoral Letter*, and to oppose his Lordship in a Design of

The P R E F A C E.

equal Goodness and Importance ; to wit, the guarding of his People against the dangerous Notions advanced by the *Deists*. This he did in a Piece which he call'd, *A Plea for Human Reason* ; and which he modestly address'd, by way of *Letter*, to his Lordship.

Now the Observations I would make on *The Second Part of the Plea*, are these that follow.

First, Mr. *Jackson* endeavours all he can to vindicate his Conduct with respect to the *Bishop*^a. He would fain cover the *Indecency* of having oppos'd him, and the *Iniquity* of having *misrepresented his Doctrine* in order to find a Handle for so doing. But these things are not now to be covered. They have been plainly

The P R E F A C E.

proved upon him beyond all Possibility of Denial or Evasion; and it is as impossible for Artifice to hide, as for Apology to defend them. It is evident to the World, that he intruded himself into a Debate which no way concerned him, and attempted to expose the Bishop, and the Cause he was engaged in, to the Insult of Unbelievers, and yet had no other Foundation to go upon, but a *Misrepresentation of his Doctrine*. And therefore whereas he says that *he should be highly ashamed to be found guilty of a Misrepresentation in a Controversy of such Moment with a Learned Prelate*; I think it is high Time, that he should be as good as his Word, and not struggle to *hide his Misconduct*, but *ingenuously retract it*.

Page 5.

A 3

Secondly,

The PREFACE.

Secondly, Mr. *Jackson* ascribes to *another Person* the Pieces which I have wrote upon the Occasion of his ill Usage of the Bishop. This I regard as a silly, and contemptible Piece of Buffoonery, which could scarce enter into any Head but his own. It is an Imputation which can injure no one but himself: And all that I shall say to it is this, that whereas in the Life Time of the *late Dr. Clark*, there were several Pieces published under the Name of a *Country Clergyman*, it is now pretty evident, from some Pamphlets that have been published since the Death of *Dr. Clark*, that the *Country Clergyman* was not the Author of those Pieces, but that they were wrote by a better Hand.

Thirdly, Mr. *Jackson* still avers,

• Page 46.

that

THE PREFACE.

that not *one single Testimony* of so much as *one ancient Church* can be produced, which accounted it Heresy to make the Father only the *One God*: Nay, not *one Testimony* of *any one private Catholick Writer* of the three first Centuries can be produced to this Purpose.

Now it is most certain, that to admit *only One Person* in the Godhead, and to make the Father *only the one God*^a, is the Essence of *Sabellianism*, and the Doctrine of *Paul of Samosata*, for which he was condemn'd by the Church. It is *Judaizing*, after the manner of *Praxeas*, *Noëtus*, and *Sabellius*, who were opposed and censured as *Hereticks*; and the Catholick Bishops, as *Eusebius* informs us, ran together against

^a Dr. *Waterland's Defence*, p. 352, 355.

Id. p. 334, 335. *Second Defence*, p. 461.

^b Hist. Eccles. Lib. 7.

The PREFACE.

Paul of Samosata, as against a Wolf, who was endeavouring to destroy the Flock of Christ. There were two Councils held at *Antioch* upon his Account^f; in the first of which his Errors were condemn'd, and in the second he himself was deposed.

It has been proved likewise by clear and express Testimonies out of the Writers of the three first Centuries, that they did not exclude the Son from the *One God*, but taught that Father and Son are *One God*, and the *Same God*. Testimonies to this Purpose g have been produced out of *Justin Martyr*, *Lucian*, *Athenagoras*, *Irenæus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, *Hippolytus*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, *Lactantius*, and *Eusebius*. These Testimonies have been de-

^f Dr. *Berriman's* Sermons, p. 147.

^g Dr. *Waterland's* Second Defence, under Query the 2d.

fended

The P R E F A C E.

fended against the Exceptions made to them. The Passages appealed to by way of counter Evidence have been examined; and it appears fully upon the whole, that the Ancients have all along believed and taught, that the Father and Son are *One God*, or *the One God*.

And is it not strange, after this, to say, that the Ancients believed the *Father only* to be the *One God*, and that not one Testimony of any one Catholick Writer of the three first Centuries can be produced to the contrary? What can we think of a Man who can harden himself against all this Evidence, and deny plain Fact in so unaccountable a manner? He who can go such Lengths as these is a kind of *privileg'd Writer*; and may e'en write on, and blot as much Paper as he pleases without Molestation. A Man who shews himself

THE PREFACE.

himself to be steel'd against Conviction, is not fit to be argued with. You may as well talk to a Stone, as to him whom no Proof can penetrate; especially if he be wise in his own Conceit; for then *there is more Hope of a Fool than of Him.*

Fourthly, Mr. *Jackson* denies the *Satisfaction* of our Saviour. He denies that the Death of Christ was a *Compensation* or *Satisfaction* for the Sins of Men; or delivered them from the Punishment incurred by their Sins, and obtained from God a Covenant of Pardon and eternal Life. He says, that Christ did not lay down his Life for *all Mankind*, but only for those who *should be Professors of his Religion*^b; And with respect to these he says, that the Death of Christ was only a *Memorial* and

The PREFACE.

Evidence¹ of the Acceptance of their Repentance and good Works without any other Sacrifice. It did not merit this Acceptance; for it could have no other Merit in it than what respected Christ himself²; but it was only a Sign to assure them of it: And the Doctrine, says he¹, of Christ's Merits, and the infinite Satisfaction of his Blood, and of the Gospel Covenant founded upon it, as it hath no Evidence from Scripture, and is contrary to the natural Notion of God, so it hath been justly exploded.

Mr. Jackson here very freely avows those Sentiments, which at first induced him, as I observed^m, to write against the Bishop of London. His Lordship had taken in the

¹ Page 22.

² Page 23, 24.

¹ Page 23.

^m In my Letter to Mr. Jackson, P. 33.

The P R E F A C E.

Merits of Christ as the Ground of the Pardon and Acceptance of sinful Men; and for this Reason in all Likelihood Mr. *Jackson* opposed him, who excludes the Merits of Christ out of his Scheme of Christianity; and says, that he could *deserve no Favour from God, but only for himself*°. These Sentiments which he hath now *four Times* asserted in Print, are contrary to the Doctrine of *our Church* to which he has subscribed, as appears from her *Homilies, and Articles, and Liturgy*; contrary also to the Doctrine of other *Protestant Churches*, as appears from their several *Forms of Confession*; and contrary to the prevailing Doctrine of the *Catholick Church* in all Ages. And upon this Account, it is very extraordinary in Mr. *Jackson* to say, that the Notion of

• Second Part of the Plea, &c. p. 24.

The P R E F A C E.

Christ's Merits, as obtaining from God a Covenant in behalf of Men, *has been justly exploded.* Exploded by whom, I pray? Why, by *Deists, Socinians*, and some *modern Arians*; by People of perverse Minds, *reprobate concerning the Faith.* These indeed have exploded it; and they have the Honour of Mr. *Jackson's* Approbation for so doing. But wiser and better Men have all along embraced it, and contended earnestly for it, as there was Occasion.

And whereas Mr. *Jackson* takes the Liberty to pronounce, that this Notion hath *no Evidence from Scripture*, I would observe, that *several Learned Men* have proved the contrary; and have vindicated the Doctrine from those very Objections against it, which he hath repeated. *Grotius*, for Instance, in his Book *De Satisfactione Christi*; and Bishop *Stillingfleet*,

THE PREFACE.

Stillingsfleet, in his *Discourse concerning the Sufferings of Christ*, have done this: And there is lately published a Piece, entituled, *Jesus Christ the Mediator between God and Man; an Advocate with the Father, and a Propitiation for the Sins of the World*; in which it is proved, by a diligent Collection, and a careful Consideration of several Passages of Scripture relating to this Point, that the Death of Christ was an *expiatory Sacrifice and Satisfaction for the Sins of Mankind*, or that it moved God to grant them a Covenant of Pardon and Acceptance. This Piece is solidly and judiciously wrote: And I know not but that it might give some Satisfaction to Mr. *Jackson*, were he to read it: Or, if it did not, he might then try whether he could work his Way through the numerous Passages cited in it, and prove them
to

The P R E F A C E.

to import no more than this, that
Christ's Death was a Sign or Evi-
dence to Men of God's Readiness to
forgive them upon Repentance.

There is nothing else in this last Pamphlet, which I think worthy of Regard. Thin Pieces of Sophistry, intermingled with Flirts and Abuses, are beneath my Concern: And as to those *Dregs of Scurrility*, borrowed from the *Dregs of the People*, which he hath, both in this Piece, and in that *Choice Bed of Flowers*, call'd, *Calumny no Conviction*, poured forth upon me, and upon a much better Man than I pretend to be; I declare for my *Part* that I utterly despise them, as I know that Gentleman for his *Part* likewise does: And I cannot but pity a Man, who appears to be like the *troubled Sea, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt.*

ERRATA.

- Page 26. Line 18. read, *repugnantly*.
Page 232. l. 26. read, *does not forbid us*.
Page 235. l. 20. dele, *or supreme Nonsense to which none is inferior*.
Page 237. l. 28. read, *ascribes the Inconsistency to God of giving to another what he claims to himself*.
Page 238. l. 8. read, *These*.
Page 248. l. 4. read, *Passible*.
Page 268. l. 4. read, *more Virtue*.
Page 272. l. 20. read, *him, for, them*.

THE
CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

THERE is just Ground to conclude from the Wisdom and Goodness of God, that he has superadded to the Light of Reason, an external Revelation of his Will, in order to improve and perfect the Nature of Men, and advance them to higher Degrees of Virtue and Happiness, than they could otherwise attain.

SERMON II.

THE Gospel is most excellently fitted to answer the End of a Divine Revelation. It is a most pure, and rational, and perfect Rule of Life. There is no manner of Defect either in its Faith or Morality; but its
a Doctrines

The CONTENTS.

Doctrines and Precepts uniformly conspire to conduct Men to that Degree of Virtue, and to qualify them for that Degree of Happiness, which they could not attain by meer Reason. The Consequence of which is, that the Gospel may be a Divine Revelation. No Objection to its Authority can be drawn from its Subject Matter : It appears in all Respects to be most worthy of God to deliver ; and we might fairly presume that it was derived from God, though it were not asserted by direct Proof.

SERMON III.

WE have direct and positive Proof of its Derivation from God ; that is, of its being reveal'd to the World by his Authority. For we know from the Attestation of the Apostles, which is perfectly unexceptionable, that God communicated to our Saviour his own Knowledge and Power, and thereby affirmed him to act by his Commission : And we know from the swift and miraculous Progress of the Gospel, that God signally interposed to spread it, and vouch'd it by so doing to be his own Doctrine.

SERMON

The CONTENTS.

SERMON IV.

THE *Proofs of its Divine Authority oblige us to believe its whole Subject-Matter; particularly, the mysterious Doctrines asserted in it; because this is a necessary Expression of Respect to God, by whose Commission it was revealed: And it is moreover highly rational and prudent upon several Accounts to believe these Doctrines.*

SERMON V.

THE *Divinity of Jesus Christ, or the Union of the Divine and Human Nature in his Person, is One of the mysterious Doctrines of the Gospel; as appears from the following Considerations.*

First, That the principal Arguments which have been used in proof that our Saviour's true Divinity is taught in Scripture, or that he is declared to be truly, and by Nature God, have stood their Ground against all the Efforts of the Adversary to invalidate their Force.

Secondly, That the Arguments chiefly insisted on in proof of Christ's natural Inferiority to the Father, have been thoroughly baffled and confuted. And

THE CONTENTS.

Thirdly, *That the Arian Scheme is clogged with insuperable Difficulties, and that the Revivers of it among us have fallen into several palpable Inconsistencies, and Contradictions.*

The principal Arguments which have been used, in proof that our Saviour's true Divinity is taught in Scripture, are these four.

First, *That the distinguishing Titles, and incommunicable Perfections of the true God are ascribed to him.*

Secondly, *That he is affirmed to be the Creator and Preserver of the Universe.*

Thirdly, *That we are directed to worship and adore him. And*

Fourthly, *That he is included in the One True God, who is declared to be the only God, besides whom there is no Other.*

The two former of these Arguments considered.

SERMON VI.

THE two other Arguments for our Saviour's Divinity considered; to wit.

First, *That we are directed in Scripture to worship and adore him. And*

Secondly, *That he is included in the One True God, besides whom there is no other.*

SERMON

THE CONTENTS.

SERMON VII.

THE Arguments which have been used by the Arians on their Side of the Question, or in proof of the Son's natural Inferiority to the Father, or his Exclusion from the One True God, are taken, First, From Scripture. Secondly, From the Fathers. Thirdly, From the Nature and Reason of the Thing. Those from Scripture are thoroughly baffled, by the abundant Proofs which are produced of its asserting the Natural Deity of the Son, or His included with the Father in the One True God. Those from the Fathers, are also confuted by the like Proofs which are produced of their affirming the Father and Son to be the One God, and the Same God. As to the Arguments taken from the Nature and Reason of the Thing, they have All of them been particularly considered and refuted; and it is impossible that they should have any Weight in them, because the Nature of the Thing is above our Comprehension.

The Arian Scheme clogg'd with insuperable Difficulties, and the Revivers of it among us have fallen into several palpable Inconsistencies and Contradictions.

The CONTENTS.

SERMON VIII.

THE Necessity of believing the true Divinity of Christ.

First, *Because the Scripture requires us to do so.*

Secondly, *Because without this Belief we must be guilty of Idolatry in our Religious Worship.*

Thirdly, *Because the Belief of his Divinity is requisite to confirm our Faith in the Unblameableness of His moral Character, and in the Truth of his Divine Mission and Authority.*

Fourthly, *Because it is requisite to preserve in us a just Reverence for Sacred Writ, or, a Conviction upon our Minds that it is a sincere, consistent, and pious Book, wrote by the Inspiration of God.*

Fifthly, *Because it is necessary to confirm our Faith in the Efficacy of Christ's Mediation, or the Certainty of his having obtained for us by his Sufferings and Obedience a Covenant of Pardon and eternal Life.*

Lastly, *Because necessary to excite a due Sense of the Divine Love in his becoming our Mediator, and to engage us to acknowledge and celebrate it with suitable Degrees of Thankfulness.*

SERMON I.

In the 16th Chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, and at the 15th and 16th Verses.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature.

He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned.

IT is, I believe, a just Observation on the Revivers of the *Arian Heresy* among us, that they have been paving the Way to *Infidelity*. * *Arianism* is plainly the Dupe to *Deism*, as *Deism* again is to *Atheism* or *Popery*; and we find that as it has been abetted of late Years with more than ordinary Zeal, so *Infidelity* has been spreading among us in a more than ordinary Degree.

* Remarks on the late Dr. Clark's Exposition of the Church Catechism, p. 94.

B

This

This Heresy has a natural Tendency to induce Men to disregard *Revelation* in general, and the *Gospel* in particular.

1st, Because it rejects all *Mysteries* in Religion; all Doctrines which are not *perfectly* understood. It denies our Saviour's *Divinity*, as being a Doctrine of this kind. It forms a Creed upon the Plan of *abstracted* Reason, and admits no other Articles into it, but what are *perceivable by Reason*; and as it makes *Reason* the Rule of *Faith*, or the Judge and Measure of the Matter of Belief, so it disposes Men to acquiesce in the *Religion of Reason*. They have so high an Opinion of its Dictates, and pay so great a Deference to them, that they have but little Notion of *Revelation*. Their natural Endowments are sufficient to instruct them; and if they admit the Gospel at all, they admit it only *by halves*; only so far as they *perfectly* comprehend it; which in effect, is to reject it altogether; to disclaim its Authority, and deny its Truth.

2dly, The *Arian Heresy* disposeth Men to lay aside *Christianity*, because it gives them a low Opinion of its Importance to Salvation. As it detracts from the personal Dignity of our Saviour, it detracts in Consequence from the Merit of his Sufferings, and from the Satisfaction he made for the Sins of Mankind; and it shuts out all Belief or Trust in his Expiation, as the Ground of Pardon and Acceptance.

ceptance. And if Men have no Faith in the *Merits* of Christ, it is natural for them to heighten their own *Merits*, and to build their Hopes of Salvation upon them. They persuade themselves that they may be *justify'd* by their Works, and attain, in vertue of 'em, the *same* Favour and Acceptance with God, which is attainable by the *Gospel*: and hence they naturally conclude, that the Gospel is not *needful*, and that the only use of it is to enforce that *moral Virtue*, on which they rely as *sufficient* to Salvation.

3dly, The *Arian Heresy* disposeth Men to reject *Christianity*, because it seems to throw a Blemish on the moral Character of its Author, in assuming more Honour to himself than he ought to have done. For our Saviour, throughout the Course of his Ministry, very much insisted on his personal Dignity, and took all Opportunities to declare it. He asserted himself to be a *Divine* Person, and *really* God as well as Man. He affirm'd that he was ^a *equal* to the Father, and *inseparable* from him, and that he had the *same Perfections* and *Authority*, and the *same* Right to *religious* Worship. If therefore he was only a *Creature*, as the *Arians* assert, it will follow, that he being a *Creature* made himself equal with his *Creator*, and arrogated the Powers and Privileges of *his God*; and how then could

^a Joh. v. 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Joh. x. 30, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.

he be a good Man ; or commiffion'd from God to reveal his Will?

4thly, The *Arian Heresy* difpofeth Men to reject *Chriftianity*, becaufe it tends to give them a mean Opinion of Scripture. For the Scripture attributes to our Saviour *every diftinctive Character* of the true God ^b. It afferts him to have *created the Universe* ^c, and to be the *proper Object of religious Worſhip* ^d; and it teaches that there is but *one God* ^e, and that *he alone* is to be worſhipped, *excluſively* of all other Beings ^f. If therefore it teaches, as the *Arians* ſuppoſe, that our Saviour is a *Creature*, the Conſequence is, that it affirms a *Creature* to be *truly God*; a *Creature*, to be *Creator*; a *Creature* to be the *Object of Worſhip*: And how then can it be conſiſtent with itſelf? or clear from the Imputation of teaching Polytheiſm and Idolatry, which at the ſame time it condemns?

Evident therefore it is, that our modern *Arians* have been leading the Way to *Infidelity*, in labouring to propagate their *Hereſy*:

^b It aſcribes to him the *peculiar Titles*, and *incommunicable Perfections* of the True God: the Titles, for inſtance, of *Jehovah*; *Lord God*; *True God*; *Mighty God*, &c. and the Perfections of *Omnſcience*; *Unchangeable Eternity*; *Omnipreſence*; *Omnipotence*, &c. See Scripture and *Arians* compared, p. 5, 8, 9.

^c Heb. i. 10. Colof. i. 16, 17.

^d See Sermon the VIth, where the Precepts and Examples relating to the Worſhip of Chriſt are recited.

^e Iſai. xlv. 6, 8.

^f Exod. xx. 3. Deut. vi. 13, 14. Matt. iv. 10, &c.

And as some of them have gone off in a great Measure from *Christian Principles*, and join'd with *Infidels* in opposing the Gospel; so it is certain, that *Deism* is become the *Fashion* of the Times, the *general Gallantry* of this corrupted Age.

For this Reason, I think it proper to set out in my present Undertaking, with asserting the *Truth of the Gospel*. For as the reigning *Infidelity* is owing partly to the *Arians*, and the Design of this *Lecture* is to oppose and resist them; to check the Progress, and obviate the Effects of their *mischievous Attempts*, I apprehend it to be most pertinent and necessary at *this Time*, to assert the *Truth of the Gospel*, which they have contributed to bring into Contempt.

The Words of the Text are part of the Commission which our Saviour gave to his Apostles after his Resurrection from the Dead. He had appointed them before to be his Ministers to the *Jews*, and to preach the Gospel of his Kingdom among them. But upon his rising from the Dead, and being invested with *all Power both in Heaven and Earth* ^g, he gave their Commission a suitable Extent. He no longer limited it to *the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, but ordered them to preach to *all Nations* ^h; and forasmuch as he knew that they had not Capa-

^g Matt. xxviii. 18.

^h Ver. 19.

cities equal to this Charge, he told them that they should in a short time *receive Power from on high*, and be enabled to attest his Doctrine and Miracles to all the Worldⁱ.

Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. That is, preach the Gospel to all Mankind. Proclaim to them the *glad Tidings* of Salvation which I have brought into the World; the *glad Tidings* of my having purchased for them the Pardon of their Sins, and eternal Life, upon the Condition of their believing my Doctrine, and acting in Conformity to it. Publish among them the History of my Life and Atchievements, and the System of Faith and Morality which I delivered. He who believes the Tidings which ye proclaim, and thereupon embraces my Religion; who is admitted into the Profession of it by *Baptism*, and acts in Conformity to it, as he engages in that *sacred Rite* to do, every such Person *shall be saved*; shall inherit the Salvation which I purchased for Mankind. But he who *believeth* not the Gospel which ye preach, nor regardeth the Terms of Salvation which ye propose; who thereupon rejecteth my Religion, and refuseth to follow its Directions; who persists in doing this,

ⁱ Acts i. 8.

SERMON I.

7

notwithstanding the Evidences ye give of your acting in God's Name, and by his Authority, every such Person *shall be damned*: shall suffer the just Punishment of his wilful Infidelity; the Penalty of *Damnation*, which is his *proper Desert*.

This I apprehend is the true Meaning of the Text; from which it is evident, that the embracing of the Gospel, which has been published to us through the *Ministry* of the *Apostles*; the believing its *Truth*, and obeying its *Laws*, is necessary to our *Salvation*. It is a Duty bound upon the Conscience by the Means of Conviction afforded us; and *Infidelity* is a *wilful* and *damnable Sin*.

As this is a Doctrine of singular Moment, I shall endeavour to explain and confirm it. I shall shew the *Obligation* we are under to embrace the Gospel; to acknowledge and revere it as a *divine Revelation*, and shall vindicate the Justice of that Sentence which is pronounced on *Unbelief*.

Now, our *Obligation* to embrace the Gospel, arises from the *Evidences* of its *Truth*. We have *unquestionable* and *certain* Proofs of its Derivation from God; and, for that Reason, we are *bound* to believe it: For since these Proofs are sufficient to persuade our Assent, and would naturally persuade it, if we did but perceive them, which we have full Power to do, it is evident, that the Want of perceiving them is entirely our *own Fault*,

and consequently, that the *Unbelief* founded upon it is a *wilful* Crime. It arises from a *wilful* Disregard of those Proofs, which would, if attended to, engage our Belief, and is a *wilful* Abuse of our Liberty, in a Case where the Honour of God, and the Event of our Actions are most deeply concern'd; and therefore I shall set forth our Obligation to believe the Gospel, from the *Evidences* we have of its *divine* Authority.

Now to deduce these Evidences in a regular Method, I would proceed as follows.

1st, We have just Ground to conclude from the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God, that he has superadded to the *Light of Reason*, an *external Revelation* of his Will, in order to improve and perfect the Nature of Men, and advance them to higher Degrees of Virtue and Happiness, than they could otherwise attain.

2dly, The Gospel is most *excellently fitted* to answer the End of a *Divine* Revelation. It is a most *pure*, and *rational*, and *perfect* Rule of Deportment. There is no manner of Defect either in its *Faith*, or *Morality*; but its *Doctrines* and *Precepts* uniformly conspire to conduct Men to that *Degree* of Virtue, and to qualify them for that *Degree* of Happiness, which they could not attain by *meer* Reason. The Consequence of which is, that the Gospel *may be* a *divine* Revelation.

SERMON I. 9

tion. No Objection to its Authority can be drawn from its *Subject Matter*. It appears in all Respects to be most *worthy of God* to deliver; and we might fairly presume that it was derived from him, though it were not asserted by *direct* Proof.

3dly, We have *certain* Evidence of its *actual* Revelation from God. We know from the *Attestation* of the Apostles which is *perfectly* unexceptionable, that God communicated to our Saviour his own *Knowledge* and *Power*, and thereby *affirmed* him to come from himself, and to act by his Authority. We know likewise from the swift and *miraculous* Progress of the Gospel, that God signally interposed to spread it, and vouch'd it by so doing to be his *own Doctrine*.

1st then, We may justly conclude from the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God, that he has superadded to the *Light of Reason*, an *external* Revelation of his Will, in order to improve and perfect the Nature of Men, and advance them to higher Degrees of Virtue and Happiness, than they could otherwise attain.

In Opposition to this Argument for an *external Revelation*, the *Deists* among us have much insisted on the *Sufficiency of Reason* for the Conduct of Men. They have asserted, that it is *sufficient in such Degree*, as to exclude the *Need*, or *Use* of divine Revelation.
But

But it has been demonstrated on the contrary, that this is an ungrounded and false Assertion.

As Reason is not *absolutely insufficient* on the one hand, or unable to do any thing at all, where no other Guide is supposed; so it is not *absolutely sufficient* on the other, or able to conduct Men to the *same Degree* of Virtue and Happiness, which are attainable by Revelation. To say that Reason is *insufficient for any thing*, is a Contradiction in Terms. It is to say, that *Reason* is not *Reason*, or that there is not such a Faculty in Mankind, as is meant by the Name of Reason; and to say that Reason is *absolutely sufficient*, is to affirm that Revelation is *needless* and *useless*, and that Christianity is little more than an idle Superstition.

The Point therefore lies here: Human Reason, though it be sufficient in *some Measure*, where it is supposed the only Guide: sufficient, for instance, to give Men some Instruction in Matters of Religion; to conduct them to some good and commendable actions, and to suggest Hopes of the divine Clemency and Favour, if they honestly pursue its Directions; yet it is very unable to discover so *perfect* a Rule of Life; or to conduct Men to so *great a Degree* of Virtue and Happiness, or to give them so *firm an Assurance* of God's Favour, as is attainable by *Revelation*; and therefore as the *Sufficiency* of Reason

SERMON I. 11

Reason excludes not the *Want*, or *Usefulness* of an *external* Light, we may justly conclude, that God has vouchsafed it.

This is the Doctrine we assert; and in Maintenance of it, I shall first prove its *Truth*; and secondly, vindicate it from the *Exceptions*, which have been advanced against it.

Ist then, I shall prove, that *human Reason* cannot convey to Men the *same Advantages*, or conduct them to the *same Degree* of *Virtue*, *Perfection* and *Happiness*, as is attainable by *Revelation*, nor consequently supersede the *Use* and *Need* of it.

It has been alledged upon this Point, that whatever may be said of *human Reason*, as to its present State, yet if it had continued in its *original Purity*, it would have wanted no Assistance to discover the *most complete* System of Duty, and to guide Men to the *highest Degrees* of *Virtue* and *Happiness*. But this is only *gratis dictum*; a *bare* Assertion without a Syllable of Proof. Who can pretend to know the *precise Degrees* of Power which *Reason* had in the *State of Innocence*? Who can say, that it *sufficed* to render Men as *perfect* and *happy*, as they could be made by *supernatural Discoveries* of God's Mind? He who asserts this, tells us his *Dreams*, and that's all. It is said indeed, that *God created Man in his own Image*^k, and made him *upright*^l;

^k Gen. i. 27.

^l Eccles. vii. 29.

that

that is, God endued Man with *Reason* and *Understanding*, by which he resembled his *Creator*, and with such *Uprightness* and *Perfection*, as to have no *Propensity* to Sin. But this does not inform us, what *Duties* he was enabled to do, or what *Happiness* to attain. They were not the same, we may conclude, as he might be conducted to by *Revelation*: because God who best knew the Extent of his Capacities, and how far he could go by their *natural* Strength, was pleased to give him a *reveal'd* Law, and to enforce it by an *express* Sanction; which is a plain Argument, that meer *Reason* was not *equally* sufficient; for if it had, God, who does nothing in vain, would not have added any Thing to it. "It^m would have been arbitrary and
 " tyrannical to have imposed a *positive* Law,
 " only

^m See the *Supplement* to the *Nature, Obligation, and Efficacy* of the *Christian Sacraments*, p. 60, where the *Author* cites from *Bishop Bull* the following Words. " Besides the
 " Seeds of *Natural Religion* sown in Man's Mind at the
 " Creation, he was also endowed with certain *supernatural*
 " Gifts and Powers, in which his *Perfection* chiefly consist-
 " ed, and without which his *natural* Powers were in them-
 " selves *insufficient* to the Attainment of an heavenly Im-
 " mortality; and consequently the *Law of Nature* as con-
 " sidered now in fallen Man without Divine *Revelation*, and
 " without any *supernatural* Assistance, is much less able to
 " confer the heavenly Immortality and Bliss upon them that
 " live up to it." Which Words are confirmed by what the
 " same learned *Prelate* observes in *another Piece*; to wit:
 " *Constans concorsque est Catholicorum omnium Doctorum,*
 " *cum qui ante, tum qui post Pelagium vixere, Sententia,*
 " *(consentientibus antiquissimis Hebræorum Magistris) pri-*
 " mum

“ only to create needless Difficulties, and
 “ unnecessary Hazards. Divine Wisdom saw
 “ that the Religion of Nature was not per-
 “ fect enough to found his Covenant upon,
 “ and therefore superadded a positive Pre-
 “ cept, and made Life and Death to depend
 “ upon it.” And it is the constant and con-
 current Opinion of the Fathers, that Man
 could not by his native Powers attain a Qua-
 lification for that Happiness, which was de-
 signed him in the Counsel of God if he had
 continued obedient, and that therefore toge-
 ther with his *natural* Integrity, a *Divine Spi-*
rit was vouchsafed, by which his *natural*
 Faculties might be exalted, and qualified for
 the Blessedness of Heaven.

How then can the *Sufficiency* of *Reason* be
 pretended? “ The highest Degrees of it
 “ which *Adam* may be supposed to have,
 “ could not tell him what, or who God
 “ was, or what Terms he would expect, or
 “ what kind of Happiness he intended for
 “ him, nor by what Help he might come
 “ at it, or be rendered worthy of it,” Nei-

“ mum hominem non modo cum integritate Naturæ condi-
 “ tum, sed & Divino insuper Spiritu donatum fuisse quo,
 “ tanquam Principio quodam *τῆς* *Divinæ* *φύσεως* Naturales ip-
 “ sius Facultates (alioquin ad id nequaquam suffecturæ) at-
 “ tollerentur ad Beatitudinem Cœlestem (quam ipsi in con-
 “ filio Dei destinatam, cujusque veluti Typum fuisse terre-
 “ stris Paradisi Felicitatem merito credidere) consequendam.
 Bul. Exam. Censuræ. p. 154. See the *Supplement* aforemen-
 tioned, p. 61.

ther

ther is it capable, supposing it ever so *perfect*ⁿ, to discover all the Relations we bear to the other Parts of the *intelligent System*; to God the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*; to *Angels*, and *Arch-Angels*, the several Orders of the *Cælestial Hierarchy*; and yet from these Relations many Duties arise, and Means are afforded us of improving in Virtue and Perfection. Now if *human Reason* was *insufficient* from the Beginning; if it *then* wanted *supernatural* Light, and *supernatural* Assistance, how much more has it wanted them ever since? And how absurd is it to talk of its *absolute* Sufficiency in its present Condition?

But in order to see clearly the Extent of its Power, it will be proper to consider *Fact* and *Experience*; or to enquire, *what it has performed* in relation to a *System of Duty*. For since its *natural* Abilities are the same in all Ages, we cannot take a more certain Estimate of what it is *able to do*, than by examining *what it has done heretofore*.

And here it is evident, that the best Light it gave in the *Pagan* World was very faint and imperfect. The *Philosophers* were the greatest Masters of *Reason* among the *Heathens*. They improved, and carried it to its utmost Extent. And yet they were very far from teaching any thing like a compleat

ⁿ See *Johnson's* Serm. p. 23.

System of Duty. Not a Man is there among them, who is not erroneous in some Points, and defective in others. Choose the best of the *Philosophers*, and he will be found to mingle some *bad Precepts* with his good ones, and to be wanting in regard both to the *true Principles*, and the *effectual Motives* of Virtue. One bad Precept, for instance, was given by them all, *not a Man excepted*; and that was, to observe the Religion established by the *Laws*, notwithstanding the Filthiness and Cruelty of its Rites. And in like manner, the only *true Principle* of Virtue was overlook'd by most of them, which is a Principle of Obedience to God; neither had they respect to his Glory, or to a Reward in Heaven. Their virtuous Actions were done, not out of regard to God, but to themselves; not out of Submission to his Authority, but for the sake of popular Applause. And yet their *Reason* was not left to *itself*, but had some Help from *Revelation*: It was aided by a *supernatural* Light, though it laboured with these Defects. "For the Gentile World, before
 " Christ came, had, at sundry Times, and
 " in divers Manners, some Beams of Divine
 " Light sent them from above, to help the
 " Dimness of the *Light of Nature*: And
 " what through *Scripture*, or *Tradition*, what
 " by direct, or indirect Conveyances, they
 " were never entirely destitute of *superna-*
 " *tural*

“*tural* Notices, never left to the *meer* Light
 “ of Nature, either for forming a Know-
 “ ledge of God and Religion, or for direct-
 “ ing their Life and Manners °.

But the Incapacity of the *Philosophers* to form a *compleat* Rule of Duty, and to *engage* Men in the Practice of it, appears most plainly from the following Particulars.

° See Dr. *Waterland's* Charge, p. 46. He proves in this excellent Piece, that *supernatural Notices*, and *revealed* Light, were communicated, more or less, to the Bulk of Mankind in every Age, and that the Pagans were instructed in divine Things, either first, by reading the Scripture: or 2dly, by conversing with Jews: or 3dly, by conversing with other Nations that had been acquainted with Jews: or 4thly, by means of publick Edicts of great Princes that had favoured the Jews: or lastly, by *Tradition* handed down to them from *Abraham*, or from *Noah*, or from the *first Parents* of Mankind. He speaks distinctly to these several Channels, by which Divine Light might be conveyed to the Heathens, and makes it appear that they derived, from one or other of them, the best Notions they had both in *Theology* and *Morality*. And if their Reason was defective, notwithstanding this Help, how much more would it have been so, if perfectly unassisted? And how vain is the Argument for its Sufficiency, which our modern Infidels use, that Mankind for many Ages had *nothing else* to direct them? This, as Dr. *Waterland* justly observes, is a *manifest Error in Point of Fact*. It is asserting what is really false, and proceeding upon a wrong Bottom; and so the Inference drawn from it sinks into nothing. Mankind, say they, had for many Ages no other Light but that of Nature; therefore the said Light is *sufficient*; therefore Revelation is *needless*. But it appears on the contrary, that Mankind were never left to the *meer* Light of Nature. What then becomes of the Conclusion built on the Supposition that they were? Why, it rests on a Falsity, and there can be nothing in it. But see the Charge abovementioned, p. 46, 56.

1st, They

1st, They were ignorant of *some* Points in Religion, and doubtful of *others*, which are of special Importance to the *Virtue* and *Happiness* of Mankind. They knew not, for instance, the *Origine* of *natural* and *moral* Evil; the Knowledge of which is requisite to a full Conviction of the *supreme Dominion*, the *Purity* and *Goodness* of God^r. They knew not the *Cause* of the Weakness and Corruption of *human Nature* which they observed, nor the *Remedy* by which it might be cured. They knew not in what *particular manner*, and with what kind of *external Service* God might acceptably be worship'd^d; nor the *certain* means by which Sinners might reconcile themselves to God, and gain the same Favour and Acceptance, as if they had not offended him^r. They had no Notion of rising from the Dead, and undergoing a solemn Trial for their Actions, and receiving

^r The Bishop of London's second *Pastoral Letter*, p. 14. Bishop *Sherlock's* Discourses of the Use and Intent of Prophecy, p. 64, 72. Dr. *Clark's* Evid. of natural and reveal'd Religion, p. 218, 2d Edition.

^d Dr. *Clark's* Evidences, p. 221. where he observes, that the Philosophers, for want of knowing the kind of *external Service* which might be acceptable to God, complied generally with the outward Religion of their Country, and advised others to do the like; and so, notwithstanding all their wise Discourses they fell lamentably into the Practice of the most foolish Idolatry. And he instances in *Socrates*, in *Plato*, in *Tully*, and *Epictetus*, as doing this. Dr. *Stebbing's* Defence of Dr. *Clark*, p. 52. The Bishop of London's second *Pastoral Letter*, p. 15.

^r Dr. *Clark's* Evidences, p. 224. and Dr. *Stebbing's* Defence, p. 40. Bishop *Chandler's* Introduction to the Vindication of his Defence of Christianity, p. 14. The Bishop of London's second *Pastoral Letter*, p. 15.

an irreverfible Sentence according to their Quality^f. They were uncertain of the Immortality of the Soul, and of a future State of Rewards and Punishments^t.

2dly, They differed about Points of the greateft Moment; fuch as concerned the very *Being* of Religion and Virtue; and made the Motives and Obligations to both uncertain and precarious. Their Differences were about the *Being of God*, and of *Providence*; about the *Immortality of the Soul*, and the *Reasons of Good and Evil*; about *God's inspecting the Behaviour* of Men, or being *pleas'd or displeas'd* on any Account^u.

3dly, They taught feveral Doctrines *directly tending to encourage Wickednefs*; and they allowed of feveral Actions manifefly *vicious and immoral*. The Doctrine, for inftance, of *Fate*; of God's *Indifference* to human Actions, and of the Soul's *dying* with the Body, gave a loofe to every Man to act as he thought fit, and to indulge his corrupt Appetites without Fear or Reftraint; and the *immoral* Actions which they allowed of were *Fornication* and *unnatural Luft*; Re-

^f Dr. *Sherlock's* Difcourfe of the Immortality of the Soul, &c. p. 253, 261.

^t Dr. *Clark's* Evid. p. 226. The Bifhop of London's fecond Pastoral Letter, p. 17. and the Defence of it, p. 11. *Grotius* in Annot. ad Lib. 2^{dum} de Verit. Relig. Christianæ. Dr. *Jenkins's* Reasonablenefs and Certainty of the Christian Religion, Vol. I. p. 367.

^u The Bifhop of London's fecond Pastoral Letter, p. 20. Dr. *Jenkins's* Reasonablenefs, &c. p. 367.

venge and Self-Murder ; Vain Glory and Popularity, and the exposing of Children to be destroyed *.

4thly, They had not *Authority* to command Obedience to their Instructions, or to bind them upon the Conscience. Their Precepts were no more than the *Precepts of Men*; the Result of their own Reason and Speculation. If any Man disliked and rejected them, he was at Liberty so to do, having no Obligations to restrain him. He was in the *Hands of his own Counsel* to judge for himself, and to pursue the Scheme most agreeable to him. He might say to any Philosopher who prescribed to him a Rule of Life;—"I am no more under your Direction, than you are under mine. You may perhaps in some Things be more knowing than I am; but pray suffer me to know best, what is most agreeable to me. I find my self happy in the Way of Life I have chosen, and should be uneasy under the Restraints you advise. Do you pursue your own Satisfaction by what Methods you please, and leave me to the same Liberty in consulting mine." And hence it has been remarked that the several Sects of *Philosophy* prevailed no farther, than

* The Bishop's Letter, p. 27, 28, 29. and the aforecited Book of Dr. *Jenkins*, p. 368, &c. *Le Clerc*, Prolegom. Histon. Eccles. p. 57. *Underbill's* Remarks on the Plea for Reason, p. 23, 24, 25.

as they suited the several Humours of Men. The *curious* and *inquisitive* betook themselves to the *Academicks*; the *soft* and *effeminate* to the *Epicureans*; and the *morose* to the *Stoicks*. Men applied themselves to whatever Opinion they liked best, and found most agreeable to their *Nature* and *Disposition* ¹.

5thly, Their *moral* Knowledge had little Effect on Mankind, or indeed on *themselves*. The grossest Impieties and Immoralities *universally* prevailed in the *Heathen* World, to which they contributed by their own *Example*. Their Lewdness and unnatural Vices are attested by several ² Authors; and the

¹ The Pastoral Letter, p. 23, 26. Dr. Clark's Evidences, p. 236. Dr. Jenkins's Reasonableness, p. 285. Dr. Rogers's Sermons, p. 10.

² Dr. Clark's Evidences, p. 211, where he observes, that
 " the Philosophers were never able to reform the World with
 " any great Success, nor to keep together any considerable
 " Number of Men in the Knowledge and Practice of true
 " Virtue. With respect to the *Worship of God, Idolatry*
 " prevailed universally,—and no Philosophers ever turned any
 " great Number of Men from it. With respect to Men's
 " Dealings one with another,—very few among them were
 " just and equitable upon true Principles, a due Sense of
 " Virtue, and a constant Fear and Love of God. With
 " respect to themselves, *Intemperance* and *Luxury*, and *un-*
 " *natural Uncleaness*, were commonly practised, even in
 " the most civilized Countries; and this not so much in Op-
 " position to the Doctrine of the Philosophers, as by the
 " Consent indeed and Encouragement of too great a Part
 " of them." And in the following Pages he refers to Hea-
 " then Writers, who attest the *universal* Corruption, and the
 " Enormities in *particular* of the *Philosophers*. See also to
 " the same Purpose the Bishop's *Pastoral Letter*, p. 29, &c. And
 " Underhill's Remarks, p. 47, 48.

Enormities of the *People in general* are specified, and complained of by their own Writers.

From these *Particulars*, which I mention only, because they have been proved by others, it appears most plainly, that *human Reason* is not able to *discover a true System of Duty*, or to enforce its Practice. It cannot either *fully instruct the Mind*, or *oblige the Conscience*. It wants the Aid of *supernatural Light* in both these respects, and therefore it does not supersede the *Need or Use* of it. How much better a Guide this Light is, we may know from hence, that the Gospel has *in fact* done more towards the reforming and improving of Mankind than ever *Reason* could do; that it has, in a manner, banished those Corruptions from among Christians, which *universally reigned*, and were *publickly allowed* among the *Pagans*; and that there is a better Sense of Religion, and in *general* a better Practice of it in *Christian Countries*, than ever were in *Heathen*. If we compare *Christians* and *Pagans* together, as to their Qualifications and Virtues, it will appear, that the best of the *Pagans* come vastly short of the best *Christians*; that the good *Pagans* are much inferior in Number and Value to the good *Christians*; and that the Bulk of the *Pagans* are not fit to be named with the Bulk of *Christians*, as to spiritual Endowments.

ments^a. These Particulars can be charged on nothing else, but the Defect of *natural* Light in Comparison to *reveal'd*; and therefore *Reason* is not *so sufficient* for the Conduct of Men as *Revelation*; which was the thing to be proved.

I proceed now 2dly to vindicate this Doctrine from the Exceptions which have been advanced against it.

1st, It has been pleaded, that if *Reason* be not a *sufficient* Guide in Matters of Religion, then *Revelation* was *necessary* to vindicate the *Justice* of God in governing Men for so many Ages by *Reason*, and therefore was not the Effect of *pure Mercy*, as it is represented to be^b.

Now if Reason were supposed *absolutely insufficient*, or unable to do any thing in religious Concerns; that is, if it were supposed that Men could not discover the Duty which God required at their Hands, and required under a Penalty for not performing it,

^a The Bishop of London's second *Pastoral Letter*, p. 36. and the *Defence* of it, p. 21.

^b *Plea for human Reason*, p. 8. where the *Author* says thus: Had Reason in any Circumstances of Men been absolutely in itself insufficient in Matters of Religion,—*Revelation* would not, in this Case, have proceeded (as the Scripture teaches us) from the mere Mercy and Goodness of God,—but it would have been necessary with respect to God himself. And again in p. 62, he says: That the *Insufficiency* of Reason supposes that there was a Necessity for God to give a new Rule of Life unto Men to vindicate the Justice of his Providence over them.

then indeed there might be Ground to plead, that Revelation was necessary to vindicate his Justice. For if God demanded of them more than he gave them Ability to discover; and made them punishable for not doing what they could not perceive by the best Light they had, there can be little Doubt, but that Justice would require such farther Light, as might supply the Defects of the other. But since it is not supposed, that Reason is *absolutely insufficient*, but only not so sufficient as the Light of Revelation; that is, not able to guide Men to the *same* Virtue and Acceptance which may be attained by Revelation, though it suffices to guide them to some measure of both, there is no room to infer, that *Revelation was necessary to vindicate God's Justice*. They to whom Reason was the only Guide, had no Ground to complain. There was no Law imposed on them, which was out of their Power to know; no rigorous Demands of Impossibilities, like those of the Task-Masters of *Egypt*. They were accountable no farther than their Capacities reached, and God *winked at the Times of Ignorance*^d. He overlook-

^a Juxta Legem Naturæ, tenetur Homo lapsus pro viribus filii relictis omne illud facere, quod ad Officium suum Deo debitum pertinere, Ratio in Consilium adhibita dictaverit— Quisquis Legem Naturæ violaverit, supplicio obnoxius est, quale ipsi irrogare Justitiæ, Sapientiæ, atque Æquitati Divinæ visum fuerit. Bul. Exam. Cens. p. 153.

^d Acts xvii. 30.

ed the Miscarriages, which, for want of better Light, were unavoidable: So that his *Justice* was clear in his Government of 'em, and wanted not *Revelation* to vindicate it. *His Righteousness* would have been like the *strong Mountains* ^c, unshaken and conspicuous, supposing he had made no *Revelation*; and therefore the *Gospel* was the Effect of his *infinite Wisdom and Goodness*, vouchsafed for the Improvement and Perfection of human Nature. It was superadded to *Reason* to relieve the Wants, and advance the Good of Mankind; to give them a *Covenant* of Mercy and Acceptance; and to guide them to the *higher Rewards* through the *more acceptable Service*. *Human Reason* was at least as *sufficient* in the State of Innocence, as it has been ever since, and yet even then God added a *revealed Law* to it. Was that Law necessary to vindicate God's Justice? No certainly; but it was given to *Adam* for his Service. It was given, because God best knows how to govern his own Creatures, and Men must be saved in *God's Way*, not in their own.

2dly, It has been pleaded, that the Supposal of the *Insufficiency* of Reason is an Impeachment of God's *Wisdom and Goodness* in leaving Men under an unavoidable Necessity of Sin^f.

Now,

^c Psal. xxxvi. 6.

^f *Plea for Human Reason*, p. 8. where he argues thus: To suppose

Now, the Supposal of the *Insufficiency* of Reason in Comparifon of *Revelation*, which is all that is contended for, does by no means infer, that God left Men for many Ages under an *unavoidable Necessity of Sin*. It only fupposes, that he did not grant them the *same Advantages*; the *same Knowledge* and *Enforcement* of true Piety and Virtue, which *Revelation* affords. They were not destitute of Power to perform what was required under a Penalty from them; nor therefore left under a Necessity of incurring the Guilt of Sin: But the Case is only this, that they had not the *same Power*, the *same Helps* and *Encouragements* to perform the *good*, and *perfect*, and *acceptable Will of God*, which are conveyed by *Revelation*. And if God will exact no more of them than what their Capacities would produce; if he will allow for *invincible Infirmities*, and condemn no Man for what he could not help, there is no room to impeach, either his *Goodness*, or his *Wisdom*. On the contrary, it is very reasonable to suppose, that while the *Pagans* had a less *Degree* of Light, God might be induced by his *Wisdom* and *Goodness* to grant

suppose that Reason was in any Circumstances of Men insufficient, is to suppose that they were destitute, through the Necessity of their Circumstances, of a sufficient Guide; which is to impeach the Goodness and Wisdom of God, in leaving Men for so many Ages under an unavoidable Necessity of Infidelity and Sin.

a larger

a larger Share of it to others, and to expect higher Services from them, for the common Benefit of Mankind, and for the promoting of all, who will be obedient to this *new additional* Light, to much higher *Degrees* of Happiness and Glory; decreeing at the same Time, to punish those with peculiar Severity, who sin under this *greater and clearer* Light; and by this Means preserving an *Equality* in his Dealings with Men.

Nor is there any thing exceptionable in such a Dispensation, unless God is obliged to make no *Degrees* of *Perfection* or *Happiness* among the Race of Mankind. But it is impossible that God should be obliged to do this, because we know by Experience that he has not done it; and we are certain, that he can never act repugnant to any of his Perfections. And therefore it is agreeable to them to suppose, that he may afford a *better Guide* to some, than he does to others, and enable them to attain *higher Measures* of *Virtue* and *Felicity*.

3dly, It has been pleaded, that the Supposal of the Insufficiency of *Reason* is an Impeachment of the *impartial* and *universal* Benevolence of God to Mankind, in leaving the greatest part of them for four thousand Years, under the Conduct of an *imperfect* Guide. If Revelation be at all useful, or needful, it was *equally* so in all Ages, and would

would have been given by an *impartial* Being *equally* to all Men^s.

To this I answer first, that God did not leave Men to the Conduct of *meer* Reason, till the Gospel was revealed.

This is particularly proved by a learned Writer^h, the Substance of whose Observations is as follows.

God has in all Ages communicated his Will

^s Christianity as old as the Creation, p. 355, 370, 8vo.
Second Address to the Inhabitants of London and Westminster, p. 6, 10, 12.

^h Dr. Jenkins, in his Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion, Vol. I. p. 44, &c. and p. 126.

Dr. Waterland also has of late handled this Argument with great Accuracy in his *Charge*. He has taken the useful Pains to clear and settle it, shewing how far, and by what Methods, *reveal'd Light* has been conveyed to the Bulk of Mankind in all Ages; because there have been Mistakes both in *Excess*, and in *Defect*. Sir John Marsham, Dr. Spencer, and Mr. Le Clerc, on the one hand, have pretended, that the *Pagans* did not borrow any religious Notions from the *Jews*, but the *Jews* rather from the *Pagans*; and Huetius, with some others, have, on the other hand, strained the Point too far, in endeavouring to deduce all the *Heathen Mythology* from *Scripture History*. Wherefore Dr. Waterland puts this Matter upon a right Foot, and points out the due Medium.

He cites *Josephus*, and several of the *Christian Fathers*, as concurring in Opinion, that the *Pagans* derived many Things from the Jewish Writings, and that the *Jews* were the Proclaimers and Publishers of true Religion to the rest of the World.

The Testimonies of *Athanasius* and *Theodoret* are so full and expressive, that I cannot forbear reciting them.

The Law, says *Athanasius*, was not intended for the *Jews* only, neither were the Prophets sent only for their sakes; but the Prophets were sent to the *Jews*, and were persecuted also by the *Jews*, while they were in reality a kind of sacred School to all the World, as to what relates to the Knowledge of God, and the Concerns of the Soul.

Theo-

Will to Men, in such Manner and Proportion, as his infinite Wisdom thought proper. In the Ages before the Flood, his Will was, by the Frequency of Revelation, and the Longevity of Men, communicated to all. In the Ages next following the Flood, the Precepts which God gave to *Noah*, were by him conveyed to the surviving World; and when the Remembrance of them began to decay, and the Practice of Idolatry to prevail, upon the Dispersion of Men into distant Places, God revealed himself to *Abraham*, and the *Patriarchs*, and sent them by his Providence into divers Countries, that they might proclaim his Will, and testify against the reigning Impiety. He sent them particularly into *Chaldæa* and *Egypt*; Places most famous for their Learning and Commerce; and most proper by their Situation for conveying the Notions of Religion to the rest of the World. Afterwards he revealed himself to the Descendants of these *Patriarchs*; and not only made special Provision by several Laws that his Will should be

Theodoret also, speaking of the *Jews*, says thus: God ordained this Nation to be a Guide to all Nations in divine Knowledge. For like as he appointed sometimes *Moses*, and at other times *Joshua*, and then *Samuel*, and afterwards one or other of the Prophets, to take the Charge of this People, and by a single Man of approved Wisdom, benefited the whole Brotherhood; so by the single Nation of *Israel* did God vouchsafe to call all Nations Partakers of one common Nature, to become Partners also in the same common Religion. *Dr. Waterland's Charge*, p. 52, 53.

communicated to other Nations, but likewise disposed of them in such a Manner by his Providence, that they might be a kind of Preachers of Righteousness to several Countries; and therefore it is evident, that God did not leave Men for four thousand Years to the Conduct of *meer* Reason.

2dly, I answer, that allowing it to be true in Fact, that some part of Mankind had not so great a *Degree* of Light, as was afforded to others; yet this is no more an Impeachment of God's *impartial* Benevolence, than other Dispensations of his Providence are.

It is evident to us, that God does not grant *equally* to all Men the *same* Advantages, or make them *equally* capable of the *same Kind* and *Measure* of Happiness. He vouchsafes to *Some*, better Parts and Endowments than he does to *Others*, and better Opportunities of improving them. He distributes to *Some*, a larger Share of temporal good Things than he does to *Others*; and a Capacity, in Consequence, of *greater* Comfort in this Life, and an *higher* Reward in the next. He disposes of *Some* into such Circumstances of Life, as are abundantly less hazardous, less attended with Temptation, than those which he allots to *Others*. Are these his Dispensations to Men inconsistent with his *universal* Benevolence? or is his *Impartiality* arraign'd by their Disparity? Certainly, God is *universally* good, notwithstanding this Difference in

in his Dispensations towards them. He distributes to *All* the Effects of his *Bounty*, though to *Some* more largely than to *Others*. He always acts according to *infinite Goodness* and *unerring Wisdom*; and as all his Gifts are *Talents* for which we are accountable, there is no *Partiality* in their various Distribution, because *the more will be required of him, to whom much is given*.

Will you say, that God must give *all Men universally* the *same* Guide, or else cannot be *impartially* good? By the same Rule, God must give *all Men universally* the *same inward Capacities*, and the *same outward Blessings*, or else can't be *impartially* good. And if God must do this; if the Perfections of his Nature require it; and we see in fact that it is not done, the Consequence is, that there is no such Being as we conceive God to be, that is, there is no God. So directly does this Argument of the *Deists* lead to *Atheism*, and terminate in it!

If there can be no *external* Revelation of God's Will, because it supposes him to be a *Respecter of Persons*, in affording more Light to *Some*, than he does to *Others*, there cannot for the same Reason be any *natural* Revelation of his Will, because as it is not *equally* vouchsafed to all Men, by Reason of their different Capacities, it equally supposes God to be a *Respecter of Persons*; neither can there be an *over-ruling Providence*; because

as its Benefits are not *equally* distributed to all Men, it supposes God to be a *Respecter of Persons*: Therefore again this Reasoning most plainly tends to *Atheism*; and if it proves that there is no *reveal'd* Religion, it proves likewise, that there is neither *Providence*, nor *natural* Religion; that is, that there is no God at all.

Little Occasion is there in the mean Time to be so scared at the Supposal of God's granting a better Guide to *Some*, than to *Others*, as to flee into these Extremes to avoid it. The Consideration that Men are accountable for the Light which is afforded them, seems fully to reconcile this Matter to God's *impartial* Benevolence. Where the Advantages are *greater*, there the Obligations and Danger are *greater* in Proportion; and where the Advantages are *smaller*, there so much the *less* is required, and the *less* also is the Hazard. The Capacity of attaining the *higher* Prize, is attended with a Liability to the *severer* Punishment; and the Incapacity for the *higher* Rewards, is not subject to the *severer* Condemnation; and therefore as the greater Advantages are *balanced* on the one hand, and the smaller *compensated* on the other, by the Degree of Punishment, to which they are respectively liable, there is nothing *hard* or *unequal* in this Dispensation. And yet supposing there was *Inequality* in it, may not God *do what he will with his own*?

May

May he not in Matters of Favour dispense them as he thinks fit? to some more, and to some less, according to his own Pleasure? We know that he cannot be bound to treat all Men alike, because we know that in fact he does otherwise. He distributes to them his Favours with a *distinguishing* Hand, and makes them not equally capable of the same Kind and Degree of Perfection and Happiness. And wilt thou, O Man, presume to reply against God ⁱ, or to arraign his Conduct? Wilt thou pretend to instruct him how to govern his Creatures, or communicate his Bounties to them? Forbear, if thou hast any Reason or Piety, such Rashness and Presumption. He best knows what is fittest in all Respects. He cannot do any thing but what is perfectly wise, and just, and good; and it becomes thee to be dumb, and not open thy Mouth ^k, because it is his doing. The Lord is King, let all the Earth keep Silence before him ^l.

Thus it appears, that we may justly conclude from the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God, that he has superadded to the Light of *Reason* an *external* Revelation of his Will, in order to improve and perfect the Nature of Men, and advance them to higher Degrees of Virtue and Happiness, than they could otherwise attain.

The Use which we are to make of this Conclusion will be considered in the next Discourse.

ⁱ Rom. ix. 20.

^k Ps. xxxix. 9.

^l Hab. ii. 20.

SERMON II.

In the 16th Chapter of St. *Mark's*
Gospel, and at the 15th and
16th Verses.

*And he said unto them, Go ye into
all the World, and preach the Gos-
pel to every Creature.*

*He that believeth and is baptized,
shall be saved: but he that believeth
not, shall be damned.*

IN order to set forth our Obligation to
believe the Gospel, which is required
in the Text under the Penalty of *Dam-*
nation, I proposed to shew the Evidences we
have of its Divine Authority, because these
are the Grounds upon which we are obliged
to believe it; and in order to deduce the
Proofs of its Divine Authority in a regular
Method, I proposed to proceed as follows.

D

1st, We

1st, We have just Ground to conclude from the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God, that he has superadded to the Light of Reason an *external Revelation* of his Will, in order to improve and perfect the Nature of Men, and advance them to higher Degrees of Virtue and Happiness, than they could otherwise attain.

2dly, The Gospel is most excellently fitted to answer the End of a *Divine Revelation*. It is a most pure, and rational, and perfect Rule of Deportment. There is no manner of Defect either in its Faith, or Morality ; but its Doctrines and Precepts uniformly conspire to conduct Men to that Degree of Virtue, and to qualify them for that Degree of Happiness, which they could not attain by *meer Reason*.

The Consequence of which is, that the Gospel *may be* a Divine Revelation. No Objection to its Authority can be drawn from its *Subject-Matter*. It appears in all Respects to be most worthy of God to deliver, and we might fairly presume it to have been derived from God, though it were not asserted by *direct Proof*.

3dly, We have certain Evidence of its *actual* Derivation from God. We know from the Attestation of the Apostles which is perfectly unexceptionable, that God communicated to our Saviour his own *Knowledge* and *Power*, and thereby affirmed him

to come from himself, and to act by his Authority. We know likewise from the swift and *miraculous* Progress of the Gospel, that God *signally* interposed to spread it, and vouched it by so doing to be his own Doctrine.

The first of these Particulars was proved in the last Discourse; and I proceed now to the Consideration of the *second*; to wit, That the Gospel is most excellently fitted to answer the End of a *Divine Revelation*. It is a most pure, and rational, and perfect Rule of Deportment. There is no manner of Defect either in its Faith, or Morality; but its Doctrines and Precepts uniformly conspire to conduct Men to that Degree of Virtue, and to qualify them for that Degree of Happiness, which they could not attain by *meer* Reason. The Consequence of which is, that the Gospel *may be* a Divine Revelation. No Objection to its Authority can be drawn from its Subject-Matter. It appears in all Respects to be most worthy of God to deliver; and we might fairly presume that God was its Author, though it were not asserted by *direct* Proof.

As we infer from the want of an *external* Revelation, that God has vouchsafed it; so we must conclude, that no Scheme of Religion can be a Divine Revelation, which answers not the End for which it was wanted; or has not a direct Tendency to improve

and perfect the Nature of Men in such Degree, as could not be done by meer Reason. If, for instance, there be any Imperfection, either in the Doctrines, or Precepts of Religion: If it teaches, or prescribes any thing, inconsistent with the Virtue and Happiness of Men, or not directly conducive to heighten and improve them, we are hence assured that God cannot be the Author of it, because it answers not the Purpose, which it would of Necessity have tended to effect, if God had revealed it. So that a natural Tendency to conduct Men to such Virtue and Perfection, as they could not otherwise attain, is an *essential Character*, or *necessary Circumstance* in a Religion, without which it is incapable of being asserted by direct Proofs; forasmuch as no Proofs of that kind can convince us of its *Divine Authority*, because we are certain that it is not such a Religion, as we conclude from God's *Wisdom* and *Goodness* to have been revealed by him.

Now this *essential Character* of a Divine Revelation, is most eminent and illustrious in the Christian Religion; as I shall endeavour to prove, by considering first the Doctrines; secondly, the Precepts; thirdly, the positive Institutions of it.

1st Then, with respect to the Doctrines of the Gospel, they give us the *clearest Direction*, and the *strongest Inducement* to serve God

God in the most acceptable and perfect manner.

They teach us, for instance, that God is a *Spirit*, and ought to be *worshiped in Spirit*; that he is a Being of infinite Purity, Wisdom, Justice, Power, Goodness and Veracity; that the Heaven and the Earth, with all Things contained in both, owe their Existence and Preservation to him; that he directs the Events of Things, and takes especial Notice of the moral Actions of Men; that he sent his own Son from Heaven (in pursuance of the Scheme concerted between them) to make Expiation for the Sins of Mankind, and to purchase a Covenant of Life and Salvation; that he gives them full Power to perform the Terms of this Covenant required on their part; and that he will admit them, after a solemn Examination of their Conduct, to all the Happiness of which they are capable, if they faithfully do their Duty; but if otherwise, allot them to a State of eternal Misery.

Now these Doctrines convey to us the most worthy Sentiments of the Nature and Attributes of God, and the best Instruction to serve him aright. They conduce to inspire us with an hearty Esteem and awful Veneration of him, and with a studious and constant Endeavour of performing his Will; to compose and support our Minds under the Consciousness of Guilt, and at the same

Time to deter us from all Wickedness; to cherish a true inward Principle of Piety and Virtue, and to render us *stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the Work of Lord^a*. So that they have a direct and powerful Tendency to promote the Honour of God, and the Perfection and Happiness of Men; and therefore as they highly contribute to the End, for which a Revelation was needful, they can never be urged against the Authority of the Gospel which teaches them; but on the contrary, are a very good Argument of its Divine Original, and might well be pleaded, from their singular Excellence, in Proof of it.

As for Example. The Doctrine, that God made the Earth, and formed Man upon it; that this visible World issued from his Power, and is supported by his Providence; that we are his Offspring, whose Welfare he consults with a fatherly Affection, and whose Actions he inspects with a special Regard; naturally tends to give us a lively and constant Sense of his Being and Power; to send up our Thoughts to him through all the Effects of Nature which we behold: To raise and cultivate religious Impressions by the Ministry of our outward Senses; to excite a due Care of our Deportment under his venerable Inspection,

^a 1 Cor. xv.

and a firm Dependence on his Goodness in all the Changes and Pressures of this mortal Life.

The Doctrine, that God is to be worshipped, not so much with *outward Formalities*, as with the *internal Worship of the Mind*, with Acts of Reverence and Fear, of Love and Resignation, naturally tends to improve and exalt our Minds; to endue them with the true Spirit of Piety, the true inward Principle, from which all outward Performances derive their Value; to give them the same Turn and Disposition with which Angels and Arch-Angels are ennobled, and to employ them in the same Offices which they perform; to keep up an intimate Commerce and Union with the Deity, the true Center of their Happiness, and to prepare them for the immaterial Pleasures of a future State.

The Doctrine, that God sent his Son from Heaven to take our Nature upon him, and to offer it up as a Sacrifice for Sin, to release us from the Guilt and Punishment of it, is admirably fitted to warm our Hearts with a Sense of God's infinite Mercy, his distinguishing Love to Mankind; to convince us of his irreconcilable Aversion to Sin, and of the extreme Danger of committing it; to warn us that *there is Justice as well as Mercy with God*, and that, *if we now pre-*

sume to sin wilfully, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin^b; to excite us therefore on the one hand to all possible Returns of Gratitude and Affection; and, on the other, to deter us from all Iniquity.

The Doctrine, that God hath established a new Covenant with us, a Covenant of *Pardon*, and *Grace*, and *Immortality*, upon the most easy and beneficial Terms, naturally tends to give us such Support and Consolation under a Sense of Guilt; such Encouragement to begin, and Animation to pursue a religious Life, as we could not attain by *meer Reason*; and yet, without which we should want sufficient Motives to attempt the Practice of our Duty, and at the same time be subject to Terror and Despair for the Violations of it.

The Doctrine lastly, that we shall all be raised from the Dead, and by an awful Voice summoned before the Bar of Christ; that there we shall be judged for our Actions with the utmost Solemnity, and sentenced to receive the Recompence due to them, is the most forcible Discouragement from Sin that can be proposed to us; the most effectual Check that can be laid on our vicious Appetites, and would not fail to overrule their Power, and restrain their Indul-

^b Heb. x. 26.

gence, were it but heartily believed, and seriously considered.

Of the same Nature and Tendency are the other Doctrines of the Gospel ; particularly, the *mysterious Truths* of it, which have been opposed with much Industry and Clamour, and made an Argument of the Incredibility of the Gospel, in which they are revealed. These Doctrines are *certain Propositions concerning the Nature and Counsels of God, which we cannot discover nor perceive to be true, by our Reason alone* ; And as it is evident that there may, and must be many Things relating to the Deity, above our Capacities to find out, or comprehend ; (*for ' who by searching can find out God, who can find out the Almighty to Perfection ?*) so we need not apprehend that the Things of this kind which the Gospel affirms, are any real Objection to its Authority. If indeed it could be shewn that these Propositions are either *contrary to Reason*, or *vicious in their Tendency*, then they would be a Bar to the Credibility of the Gospel which affirms them ; because it is impossible for God to assert any Falshood, or to encourage any Wickedness. But there is no reasonable Ground for any such Allegation. For it is demonstrable, 1st, That they are not *contrary to Reason* ; and secondly, That they

* Job xi. 7.

highly

highly conduce to *promote Holiness of Life.*

First, The Mysteries of the Gospel are not *contrary to Reason*. We can discover in them no Contrariety to any evident Truth, or to any certain Conclusion of our Reason. Many indeed have presumed to charge them with Inconsistency, and endeavoured to fix this Imputation upon them: But their Attempts have ever been defeated, and the Truth, in the Issue of the Debate, has appeared to be this; that as we cannot by our Reason discover those Propositions, so neither can we perceive whether they are true or false; we cannot discern by our *Reason*, either their *Truth* on the one hand, or their *Falshood* on the other; and if so, then they may be true, and God therefore may affirm them; for ought any thing we know to the contrary; and if God may affirm them, then they may be a Subject of Divine Revelation; and consequently, we cannot urge them against the Authority of the Gospel in which they are delivered, or conclude from their being a part of it, that it is not a Divine Revelation.

This is the Sum of what is pleaded in Defence of the Gospel, against those who have argued from its *Mysteries* in Disparagement of it: and it is certainly a most *rational* and *sufficient* Plea. What we do perceive by the Conclusions of Reason to be false,

false, we cannot admit to be revealed by God, without admitting at the same time, that he may affirm a Falshood. But what we can't perceive to be false, that we must own to be possibly true; and if so, we may admit it to be revealed by God, without any Necessity of admitting in Consequence, that he may affirm a Falshood.

As for Instance. That there is one God, one eternal self-existing Being, is a Conclusion which we plainly perceive to be true; and therefore any Proposition repugnant to this Conclusion, we are sure cannot be affirmed by God. But the *manner* of the *Divine Existence* is a Subject which we know nothing of: Our Reason is here in the dark, and cannot affirm, or deny any Thing about it. Suppose then it be affirmed in a System of Religion, that the one God exists in three Persons; the Proposition is plainly above our Comprehension. We cannot by any Light of our own perceive it to be true; but neither can we perceive it to be false. We can see no Repugnancy in the Ideas affirmed of each other, any more than we can make out the Connexion between them. 'Tis impossible to shew that the one God-head cannot subsist in three Persons; because *God is great, and we know him not*: Therefore since there may be a *Trinity* of Persons in the Deity, and the Affirmation that there is so, is not discernibly false, we may admit
it

it to be revealed by God, without supposing him capable of asserting a Falshood; and we cannot conclude from such Affirmation, that the Religion which delivers it is not from him.

The same Way of Reasoning is applicable to the other *Mysteries* of the Gospel; and therefore I shall now proceed 2dly to shew, that they highly conduce to promote Holiness of Life.

The Doctrine of the *Trinity*, for Instance, tends to possess us with the same just Sentiments of God's *unsearchable Greatness*, of his infinite Transcendency to our limited Comprehension, which all his Attributes conspire to do. For as it is most reasonable to think, that the *Existence* of God is equally *inconceivable* with his *Nature*, and with the several Perfections belonging to it, such as *Eternity*, *Omnipresence*, and the like; so the Doctrine of the *Trinity* raises his Existence with just Congruity above our Conceptions, and directs us to venerate the stupendous Being, and to *praise him according to his excellent Greatness*.

Again: The Doctrine of *God's Manifestation in the Flesh*; of his submitting to assume our Nature, and by his Sufferings in it to purchase a new Covenant for us, directly tends to excite our most affectionate Esteem, most hearty Thankfulness, most lively Aspirations to him, and engage us to
express

express these noble Sensations of the Mind in suitable Acts of Piety and Devotion. When we consider this stupendous Act of unparallel'd Love, how can we forbear the Exclamation of St. Paul ^d, *Oh! the Depth of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!* How can we choose but say with David in the Ardor of Devotion, ^e *Awake up my Glory: Awake Lute and Harp; I my self will awake right early: I will give Thanks unto the Lord as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my Being.*

The Doctrine of *Christ's Union* with his Disciples, and communicating to them the like Virtue and Influences, which the *Head* does to the inferior Parts of the *Body*^f, by which they are enabled to execute the Functions belonging to them, is *a Mystery of Godliness*; for it naturally conduces to excite our Humility, by instructing us in our Weakness; to excite our Devotion, by shewing our Dependence; to excite our religious En-

^d Rom. xi. 33.

^e Psal. lvii. 8.

^f Eph. i. 22, 23. Col. ii. 19. This last Passage is excellently illustrated by Bishop Davenant. *From Christ the Head the Body has Nourishment ministred; ἐπιχορηγῆται.*—Quid hoc est? Græci χορηγόν appellant illum qui omnia Ornamenta suppeditat sacras Choreas agentibus. Ab his ductâ Metaphorâ, χορηγῆν dicitur, quicumque aliis suppeditat res ad quemcunque finem necessarias; & ἐπιχορηγῆν est hoc facere abundè & copiosè. Cum igitur a Christo dicitur totum Corpus Ecclesiæ—ἐπιχορηγούμενον, id vult Apostolus, omnia ab illo abundè suppeditari Ecclesiæ suæ sibi adhærenti, quæ sunt ad ejus salutem necessaria. Expof. Epist. ad Coloss. p. 243.

deavours, by ascertaining their Success; to confirm our Hopes, our Comfort, our Joy in Jesus Christ, by displaying the honourable, the blessed Relation which we bear to him.

The Doctrine of the *Resurrection of the Body*, of its repeated Union with the Soul which now inhabits it, in order to our receiving the due Reward of our Deeds, adds *Weight* to the Certainty, and *Force* to the Influence of a future State of Punishments and Rewards. The Notion of our rising from the Grave, and being constituted, after Death, the very same Persons we are now, gives us the brightest Conviction of a *future State*, and the most awakening Call to live well in *this*. The Consideration that in these Bodies of ours *we shall see God hereafter*; that in these very Bodies, through which we have received the Vicissitudes of Pleasure and Pain, we shall be assigned to an unalterable State of the one, or the other, strikes upon our *Hopes* and *Fears* with all possible Force, and is alike efficacious to influence the Will, as sensible Evidence is to convince the Judgment. It sets our own *Experience* before us, which is more moving than any thing besides; and by this means, it has greater Power to affect, and prevail over the Heart, than the Assurance in general of a future Retribution.

* Job xix. 26.

Now,

Now, as the *Doctrines* of the Gospel appear to be of such Nature and Tendency, as to afford no Objection to its Authority, so I shall proceed 2dly to consider the *Precepts* of the Gospel, and to shew that they are no Bar to its Credibility, or give no Reason to conclude, that God cannot be the Author of it.

Now the *Precepts* of the Gospel are a System of the most *pure* and *useful* Morality; of a Morality most reasonable in itself, and most subservient to the *private* and *social* Happiness of Mankind. All the Parts of this System, in its several Relations to God, our Neighbour, and our Selves, are entirely consonant to the Nature and Reason of Things, and eminently promote the most *extensive* and *durable* Interest of Men. The Duties it enjoins are, as to the *outward Act*, highly conducive to make us happy in *this Life*, and the *inward Principles*, upon which we are directed to perform them, tend at the same time, to improve and exalt the Mind, and qualify it for eternal Blessedness in the *next*; for the perpetual Intercourse and Communion with God, the Ground and Consummation of its Felicity.

I shall not enumerate the several Duties of Christianity, and shew in particular the *natural Fitness*, or beneficial Tendency of each. This would be a tedious, as being a needless Employment. But I shall shew their

their Excellence from some *general Observations* which clearly illustrate it.

1st, We may observe, that the Love and Adoration of God, and the habitual Correspondence with him, which the Gospel prescribes, fix the Bent of the Soul upon its heavenly Parent, and keep it always aspiring towards him. They endue it with an hearty Disposition to serve him here, and to be more intimately united to him hereafter; and they advance it by so doing, to that State of *Purity*, which crowns its Glory, and completes its Happiness. A devout Frame of Mind is the brightest Ornament and Perfection of human Nature: It raises us still farther above the Brutes, and still nearer to the Angels: It employs us in the proper Work of a living Soul, and in the only Entertainment we can have hereafter: It translates us, in a manner, to Heaven, while we live here below, and prepares us for its Enjoyments in the blessed Society of similar Spirits: It improves our Relish, and swells our Hopes of Immortality, as we nearer approach to it, and makes the Conclusion of this Life the Beginning of Glory. For Heaven is the natural Abode of a devout Mind, and Death is nothing else but a Passage to it.

2dly, We may observe, that the *Holiness* and *Veracity*, the *Justice* and *Equity*, the *Benevolence* and *Compassion*, which the Gospel requires,

requires, are the amiable Characters of the Deity ^h. These are the Attributes implied in the Idea of God; which ascribes them to him in an unlimited Degree. If therefore the Attributes of the Deity are agreeable to the most perfect Reason, the Imitation of them must be so too. Those Qualities and Actions cannot but be most excellent and rational, by which we resemble the *great Standard* of Reason, and the *great Original* of all Excellence; and therefore the Precepts which direct them are most highly *rational*.

3dly, We may observe, that the *moral Rules of the Gospel* have been approved and recommended by the most celebrated Masters of Reason; by Men of the greatest Capacities and Improvements in all Ages; that, they have been proposed as the wisest and best Provision for the general Happiness of Mankind; that, the greater part of these Rules has been prescribed by the Wisdom of all Laws; and wherever any Institution has departed from them, it has been generally censured as defective, and contrary both to Prudence and Justice.

4thly, We may observe, that the *Morality of the Gospel* is approved, not only by

^h The late Dr. Rogers has some excellent Reflections on this Point in his *Sermons*, p. 73.

ⁱ See the late Dr. Rogers's *Sermons*, p. 65.

the wise and judicious, but likewise by the vicious and immoral part of Mankind. For while they severally transgress its Rules, as their respective Inclinations direct them, they disallow at the same Time those Vices, for which they have not a particular Fondness, and approve of those Virtues, to which they have not a particular Reluctance. Human Reason, weak and corrupted as it is, has yet Sense enough to distinguish Virtue from Vice, and to applaud the one, and reject the other, but when its Judgment is over-ruled by *Partiality*. The covetous Man can see and condemn the Obliquity of Intemperance; and the intemperate Man can do the same with respect to Covetousness^k. The Proud and the Oppressive, the Revengeful and the Fraudulent, reciprocally condemn the Vice of each other, whilst they allow of their own; and they each confess the Law to be good, but where

^k "I doubt not, says the late Dr. Rogers, but if every single Virtue were put to the Vote, even of the whole Herd of Mankind, placed under all the Liberty that can be imagined, a great Majority would declare for every one; though if the whole System of Virtues were proposed together, the various Interests of Mens Passions inconsistent some with one Precept, and some with another, would engage, perhaps, a greater Majority to reject it. Nor is it possible for any Principle, but an Authority superior to these Passions, to reconcile them to it. But still the Inference suggested upon the whole, would be, that human Reason approves Virtue, and condemns Vice in every Case, but where a manifest Partiality overrules its Judgment." Serm. p. 60.

their

their favourite Immorality is concerned. And therefore though they may severally object to those Precepts, which restrain their particular Vices, yet since they approve of the rest, it is evident, that there is no Precept of the Gospel but what they commend, take all of them together, and acknowledge to be a *reasonable* and *useful* Direction.

It is farther observable, that Men will condemn in others even those Vices which they allow in themselves. He who defrauds another will not confess it reasonable that another should defraud him. He who corrupts his Neighbour's Family, will not be content that the same Injury should be returned upon him in his own. He who is guilty of Oppression or Couzenage, of Censure or Detraction, will loudly exclaim against these Actions when done to himself. And what is the Reason of this? Why, that he really disapproves these Things, although he commits them; and the Allowance of them in his own Practice, is not from the Conviction of his Reason, but the Prevalence of his Passion; so that all Mankind confess the Precepts of the Gospel *to be holy and good*¹.

Lastly,

¹ Rom. vii. 12. In which Chapter St. Paul elegantly describes the Conflict there is in a vicious Man, arising from his inward Approbation of the Law, while his Passions carry him

Lastly, We may observe, that all the Rules of Virtue which were delivered by the *several Sects of Philosophers*, and which lie scattered up and down in their Works, are *collected in the Gospel*; and not only collected, but *exalted and improved*, even to the highest Pitch of Excellency and Perfection.

The Duties of Piety which were taught by the *Heathen Moralists*, are prescribed with much more Clearness and Purity in the Gospel, and with much more Power enforced upon us, by the brighter Discoveries of the Nature, and Counsels, and Works of God. The Duties of *Justice and Benevolence*, which the *Heathen Writers* recommended with much Elegance and Beauty, are enlarged in their *Extent*, and heightened in their *Degree*, by the Gospel Precepts, and directed to be done upon *better Principles*, and for *nobler Ends*. The Duties of *Humility and Self-Denial*, of *Chastity and Temperance*, which we scarce find in the Catalogue of *Pagan Virtues*, are frequently and particularly taught in the Gospel, and grafted into its Scheme of Morality, in order to advance the Conduct of Christians above that of the *Gentiles, who know not God*.

him to transgress it.—*That which I do, I allow not, ver. 15.—I consent unto the Law, that it is good, ver. 16.—I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man. But I see another Law in my Members warring against the Law of my Mind.—ver. 22, 23.*

The

The Gospel moreover has enjoined several Duties, which were not known in the *Pagan* World. It has brought the Duties to *Light*, as well as the Motive of *Life and Immortality* ^m to enforce them. And as it has thus *extended the Law of Nature*, so likewise the Law of *Moses* is *filled up* by it ⁿ; is compleated in its *preceptive*, as well as typical Parts, like a Picture, to use the Comparison of the *Greek Fathers*, which, after its being imperfectly sketch'd out, is then drawn to the Life; is filled up with Lights and Shades, and expressive Colourings, and perfected by the finishing Hand of the Artist.

If therefore the *moral Rules* of the Gospel are conducive to perfect our Nature, and raise it to a Resemblance of the Deity: If they have been recommended in all Ages by the wisest and most judicious Men: If their Goodness is acknowledged even by those who transgress them: and if they are highly superior to all the *Morality* that ever was prescribed before; if this be the Case, it is plain that they are truly excellent, and rather a Proof of the Divine Authority of the Gospel, than an Objection to it. For if it were not from God, how could its Precepts be so *singularly good*; so *transcendently*

^m 2 Tim. i. 10.

ⁿ Mat. v. 17. See *Hammond's Practical Catechism*, p. 118.

pure? How can we account for its surpassing all the *Morality*, that ever *human Reason* could discover?

But be this as it will. We have no Need to press the moral Rules of the Gospel in *direct* Proof of its Authority; it is enough that they cannot be pleaded in Opposition to it. For if this cannot be done, it is evident, that the Gospel *may be* a Divine Revelation, and may therefore be asserted by *positive Proofs*; and this is all that we are concerned to insist upon.

Wherefore I proceed 3dly to shew, that as the *moral Precepts* of the Gospel are *reasonable* and *useful*, so the *two positive Institutions* of it are the same.

They were appointed to bind us the *more strictly*, to excite us the *more forcibly*, and to enable us the *more effectually*, to observe the Rules of the Gospel; and therefore they are no less *reasonable* and *useful* than those Rules, as being subservient to the same Ends and Uses, to which they are directed.

In

° The Efficacy of the two Sacraments to promote a Christian Life, has lately been proved by a very learned and able Hand, in a Book, entituled, *The Nature, Obligation, and Efficacy of the Christian Sacraments considered.*

They are, in the first Place, *naturally* conducive, or aptly contrived in their very Nature, to promote a good Life, because they are *federal Rites* in which we covenant with God through Christ, binding our selves in the most solemn manner, ever after to obey God in every Article of Duty, to the utmost of our Power, p. 46.

zdly. Besides this *natural* Effect, there is also a *supernatural*

In the Sacrament of *Baptism*, we are solemnly bound to keep God's holy Will and Commandments as long as we live. This sacred Bond is a constant, pressing Incitement to keep them; and the blessed Influences of God's Spirit are conveyed to us, by which we may be enabled so to do.

In the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*, we renew this solemn Obligation. We commemorate the infinite loving Kindness of God in Christ; the infinite Condescension of our Saviour in submitting to be our expiatory Sacrifice; the infinite Demerit of Sin in his bleeding and dying for its Atonement; and the infinite Danger of venturing to commit it; which are so many forcible Arguments to keep our Vow; and we receive the *supernatural* Grace of God, to assist, strengthen and confirm us in all Goodness: And therefore as these Sacraments are thus excellently fitted to promote Christian Obedience, it is

tural Virtue derived from above upon the worthy Receivers of the Sacraments. This is plainly the Doctrine of our *Church Catechism*, where it speaks of the *inward and spiritual Grace*, going along with the worthy Reception of them. And it is also the Doctrine of our *Articles*, and *Homilies*, and *Liturgy*; and likewise of the Scripture, which teaches it in several Passages. Neither is it liable to the Imputation of *Enthusiasm*. For whatever is done by the Holy Spirit, in working upon the Mind of the Receiver, is done in a Way suitable to the Nature of Man considered as a *moral Agent*, and does not exclude the Concurrence of human Will and Endeavour. What is supernatural in it, does not destroy natural Agency, but helps, raises, and advances it, p. 51.

evident, that they cannot be charged with *Uselessness*, or *Absurdity*; nor therefore urged in bar to the Authority of the Gospel.

Neither is it true, that *they have the Nature only of Means to an End, and that therefore they are never to be compared with moral Virtue*.

This is a degrading Account, and a mischievous Notion of them. The right Use of the Sacraments is greatly conducive to the Practice of all Christian Duty; and in this View, *it has the Nature of Means to an End*; and so, every *moral Virtue* has the *same* Nature, because they are mutually conducive to each other, by reason of their mutual Connexion and Dependence: But besides its *excellent Tendency*, it is itself a part of *moral Duty*, or *moral Virtue*, as it is an *Act of Obedience* to the Command of God. In this View, it is consonant to the eternal, immutable Nature of Things, in that it is eternally, unalterably fit, that God should be obeyed in what he commands; and for this Reason, it is *moral Virtue* in the same Sense, as Justice or Charity is, being alike founded in the Nature and Reason of Things.

Besides, it is observable, that those Actions which are of a *moral* Nature, have no *moral Goodness* or *Virtue* in them, unless performed upon a Principle of Obedience to

? Dr. Clarke's Exposition of the Church Catechism, p. 282.

God.

God. It is this Principle which constitutes their *moral* Goodness, and gives them the Name and Nature of *Virtue*. Their *natural Fitness*, or beneficial Tendency, is only *natural*, or *material* Goodness, which there is in many Actions of the Brutes; but *formal*, or *internal* Goodness, is a quite different Thing, and depends on their flowing from a Regard to God. Suppose a Man to do an Action of this kind, meerly on Account of its *natural Fitness*, and exclusively of any Respect to God's Will, it is evident, that such Action is not *morally* good, because it wants the *right Principle* to make it so. It is only doing as *Nature* prompts, or gratifying of *natural Instinct*, and has much the same *Virtue* in it, as eating when you are hungry, or drinking when you are dry; and for a farther Proof, that the *moral* Goodness of those Actions, whose *Matter* is good, depends on the *inward* Principle wherewith they are done, we may take Notice, that they become *morally* evil, if performed with any other but a *religious* View.

In short, it is the *chusing* to obey God, or to act in Conformity to Divine Law, in which the *moral* Virtue of every Action consists, be it *materially* what it will; and therefore since there is this Obedience to God, in the right Use of the Sacraments, the Consequence is, that it is not *meerly a Means* to *moral* Virtue, but a *real Part* of it, and an Act as
much

much *morally* good, as any Action whatever of a *moral* Nature.

We may consider farther, that the worthy Reception of the *Sacraments*, is an Exercise of several *moral* Duties. As it requires, by way of Preparation, the renouncing of all Sin, and the sincere Purpose of entire Obedience, so it is doing what *Moses* directed the People of *Israel*; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and fear him, and serve him, and remember what he hath done for thee, and cleave stedfastly to him.* “ And if
 “ the greatest and highest Use of moral Du-
 “ ties be to form in us proper Dispositions
 “ of Mind, such as may fit us for the hea-
 “ venly Society; is there not the same Use
 “ in these *positive* Performances, so aptly
 “ contrived to dispose our Minds aforehand;
 “ first, to a due Reverence to, and Union
 “ with God the Father, the Head of all;
 “ next with God the Son, and God the
 “ Holy Ghost; and after them, with *An-*
 “ *gels, and Arch-Angels, and all the Company*
 “ *of Heaven*, with whom we join in Praises
 “ and Thanksgivings to God, as often as
 “ we devoutly partake of the Holy Com-
 “ munion? These are Advances in the Ex-
 “ ercise of Holiness and Piety, much be-
 “ yond any Thing in mere *natural* Reli-
 “ gion; and therefore it must be thought

^a The *Nature, &c.* of the Christian Sacraments, p. 55.

“ very strange, that *natural Duties*, founded
 “ upon *lower Views*, and not more *certain*,
 “ or more *unchangeable Relations*, shall be
 “ called *Virtues*, and these devout Exercises
 “ shall not ; but shall be called by a diminutive
 “ degrading Title, *Means* only to Virtue,
 “ and nothing more. I assert therefore,
 “ that they are direct Acts of Religion and
 “ Piety, and are Duties of the *first Table*,
 “ having an immediate Respect to God ; on
 “ which Account they ought to come be-
 “ fore, and to be placed in the first Rank
 “ above the *social Duties* towards Man ;
 “ though both must hang together, and
 “ neither can be perfect, or *sincere*, without
 “ the other.”

It is observable farther, that the worthy Reception of the *Sacraments* not only *qualifies* us for the Kingdom of Heaven, but likewise *gives us a Title* to it, which *moral Virtue* can by no means do. It gives us an Interest in the Gospel-Covenant, and conveys to us the Benefits of it ; by virtue of which, our good Works have a *Right* to God's eternal Acceptance, though of themselves they *deserve* no Recompence, nor can *claim Reward*. It is therefore of much *greater Advantage*, and serves to a far *higher End*, than *moral Duty* ; in that it *sanctifies* the Performance of it, and renders it *effectual* to Salvation, which it could not otherwise be.

Lastly, We may take Notice, that as it has this *saving* Effect with regard to *our selves*, so it is beneficial to *others*; because it enforces and promotes the Practice of all Christian Virtues, and advances by so doing the common Happiness of Mankind. It tends also to spread that Reverence for God Almighty, of which it is a lively Expression, and to keep up in the World a becoming Awe and Veneration of him; which is of eminent Importance to the publick Interest and Service. And for this Reason, it may be compared with *moral* Virtues in respect even of the *outward Matter*, as it is *equally* beneficial to Men; though supposing it not to have the same *natural Goodness*, yet this is more than counterbalanced, by the *higher Ends and Uses* answered by the *Sacraments*.

From these Considerations it appears, that the *Christian Sacraments* are not barely *Means* to moral Virtue, and *absolutely* inferior to it. They are *equally* obligatory, and *equally* important with *moral* Duties, and may in some Cases be *more valuable*: The low Notions of them which have of late been abetted, are apparently calculated for the Service of *Deism*, and have been made use of by the *Deists* in favour of their Scheme. For if *positive* Institutions are only *Means* to *moral* Duty, then they are no Duties themselves, nor of any Use or Moment

at all, but as serving to that End; and so, *revealed Religion*, being a *positive* Institution, is only a *Means* to moral Virtue, and of no farther Consideration and Regard, than as tending to promote it. *Moral Virtue* is the great End of all; and if it may be attained by Reason and Reflection, without the Use of any Thing *positive*, as the *Deists* have broadly intimated, then Christianity is an *useless* Institution, and we have no Need or Occasion for it.

It is observable that the famous Code of Deism, called, *Christianity as old as the Creation*, goes upon this Principle, that Christianity is only a Means to *natural Religion*, or *moral Virtue*; a meer Republication of the Duties, and Motives to them, which we can plainly perceive by the Light of *Reason*; and it is remarkable too, that they who have *arose from among ourselves*, speaking in Disparagement of the *Sacraments*, as meerly ministerial to *moral Virtue*, have run into the very same Sentiments with avowed *Infidels*. They have asserted that *Reason is a sufficient Guide in Matters of Religion*: That, *we may find out by Reason the TRUE MANNER of worshipping God, and, the MEANS of gaining his Reconciliation and Acceptance, and, the CERTAINTY of future Rewards and Punishments*: That, *PAGAN Virtues are as Valuable as EVANGELICAL*; and that, *the Religion of NATURE, and that of JESUS, are exactly*

actly the SAME. All which are manifestly *unchristian* Tenets, disavowing the *Want* and *Use* of the *Gospel*.

This being the Case, it is highly requisite to assert the *Obligation* and *Value* of *positive* Institutions, for the sake of our Religion, which is struck at by degrading them, and for the sake of *Morality* too, which is undermined at the same time. For whatever strikes at Christianity, is equally injurious to moral Virtue, which can't subsist but upon the Christian Bottom. Without this Foundation, it has neither *Rule* to fix it, nor *Authority* to enforce it, nor *Sanctions* to bind it on the Conscience. It is nothing more than what every Man's private Reason suggests to him, and what his Passions and Prejudices unrestrained direct him to do. And therefore the extolling it to the Prejudice of the Gospel, is only lifting it into the Air to be gazed at like a glittering Meteor, and made the Subject of Speculation, instead of the Rule of Life.

But enough of this.

The Point I have attempted to prove is, that there is nothing in the Subject Matter of the Gospel; in its *Doctrines*, or *Precepts*, or *positive Institutions*, which can be objected to its Authority; and that therefore it *may* be a Divine Revelation. Whether it was *actually* revealed from God, is an Enquiry of *Fact*, which I shall endeavour to resolve in the next Discourse.

SER-

SERMON III.

MARK xvi. ver. 15, 16.

*And he said unto them, Go ye into
all the World, and preach the Gos-
pel to every Creature.*

*He that believeth and is baptized,
shall be saved: but he that believeth
not, shall be damned.*

HAVING proved in the last Dis-
course that the Gospel *may be* a
Divine Revelation, the Way is now
fairly open to enquire into the *Fact*, whe-
ther God did reveal it: that is, whether he
commissioned our Saviour to publish it, or at-
tested him, by the Communication of his
own Knowledge and Power, to act by his Au-
thority. For if God communicated to him
his

his Divine Knowledge and Power; or enabled him to foretel and perform what *no Man can possibly do, except God be with him*, it is evident, that God attested him to act by his Commission; and consequently, that God was the Author of his Doctrine, and revealed it to the World by his Ministry.

The Question therefore is, *whether God appeared to authorise our Saviour*, by communicating to him *his Divine Knowledge and Power*? And as this Question is concerning an *ancient Fact*, supposed to have been done many hundred Years ago, we must for the Resolution of it have recourse to the *Evidence of Witnesses*; for there is no other Way of knowing the Truth of Facts, which we see not our Selves, but by the Testimony of Others; and if they who attest such Facts appear to be *knowing and faithful*; to have such *certain Knowledge* as not to be deceived themselves, and such *unquestionable Veracity*, as not to deceive Others by a false Report, then their Testimony amounts to a *sufficient and certain Proof* that they really happened.

Now as to the Fact of God's communicating to our Saviour his *own Knowledge and Power*, the Witnesses of it are his Servants the *Apostles*. These, in pursuance of his Appointment, attested the Events and Transactions of his Life. They first declared them by Word of Mouth in the several Nations
whither

whither they travelled, and afterwards committed them to writing, for their surer Conveyance to future Ages. The History of their Master which they published to the World in this Manner, has from them been transmitted to us. We now have it in the Books of the New Testament, which bear their Names as the Authors of them. For we know that these Books were wrote by those, to whom they are severally ascribed, and that they have descended down to us without any *material* Alteration.

We are assured that they were wrote by those, whose Names they bear, because they have been cited *as such*, in every Age quite down from their own Times *. They are cited by

* This is so unquestionable a Reason of the *Genuineness* of a Book, that *Huetius* lays it down as an *Axiom*, that every Book is *genuine*, or wrote by the Person to whom it is ascribed, which has always been accounted so, from the Time in which it was wrote. *Omnis Liber est genuinus, qui genuinus habitus est ab omnibus proxime & continuatâ serie sequentibus eum ætatibus. Axiom. 1.*

Hoc Axioma, says he, si quis vocaverit in Controversiam, jam certum nihil habebit in Literis. *Cæsar*is Commentarios genuinos esse non aliunde scio, quam ex proxime consequentium ætatum, aliarumque iis succedentium constanti Testimonio: nam & genuinos agnoscunt *Cicero*, & *Hirtius*, ac deinde *Strabo*, tum *Suetonius*, & *Plutarchus*, & *Grammatici* postmodum *Veteres*, ac reliqui subinde ad hanc usque ætatem Scriptores. *Demonst. Evang. p. 18. 8^{vo}.*

From this *Axiom* he infers the *Genuineness* of the Books of the New Testament in the following Manner. Atqui *Novi Testamenti Libros* proximæ & continuatâ serie sequentes ætates ab iis Autoribus scriptos esse crediderunt, a quibus

by Authors contemporary with them; and by several Authors in all the intermediate Ages down to our own. The *Jews* and *Heathens* have owned them to be wrote by those to whom they are ascribed, and they have been constantly received as their genuine Works by all Christians in the World.

We are assured that they have descended to us without any *material* Alteration, because they were not only transcribed immediately, and distributed among the Churches which were then founded; but also were soon translated into several Languages, and dispersed through most Parts of the World^b. So that no Addition or Alteration of Moment could be made in them without Discovery.

bus dicuntur esse scripti, & iis circiter Temporibus, quibus scripti esse feruntur; unde concluditur genuinos esse Libros Novi Testamenti. But as the Stress of this Point lies, as he truly says, in proving the *Assumption*, or that the Books of the New Testament have ever been believed to be wrote by those to whom they are ascribed, so he proves this of every Book in particular. *Demonst. Evang.* p. 29, &c.

The same Thing has lately been done with great Learning and Judgment by the Bishop of *London*, in his third Pastoral Letter, p. 14, 23. and 35 to 65.

See also *Grotius de Verit. Rel. Chr.* lib. 3. c. 2.

^b *Grotius de Verit. Rel. Chr.* lib. 3. c. 15.

Stillington's Origin. Sacr. 4^{to}, p. 344.

Jenkins's Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion, Vol. II. p. 143.

The Bishop of *London's* third Pastoral Letter, p. 63.

Fiddes's Body of Divinity, Part I. p. 226.

Besides,

Besides, the *Originals* themselves were for a long time preserved in the Church, to which recourse might be had for detecting any Corruption of them; and which were often consulted for the deciding of Doubts and Controversies about the sacred Text ^c.

Nor is it unworthy of Remark, that the very *Heresies*, the Oppositions to true Doctrine, which arose very early, and have *all along* continued in the Church, have been a Means of preserving the *Purity of Scripture*. For as they raised different Parties among Christians, and engaged them to have a watchful Eye upon each other throughout the Course of their Debates, it was impossible that either of them should corrupt, or insert any Passages in favour of their respective Doctrines, but they must have been detected^d. Therefore we have *now in our Hands* the very History of our Saviour's Life, which the Apostles published to the World.

Now then, let us proceed to consider what they report in this History, and what Reasons we have to conclude that their Re-

^c Tertullianus aliquot Librorum ipsa Archetypa suo adhuc Tempore ait extitisse. *Græc. de Verit. Rel. Chr. Lib. 3. c. 3.*

Quidni ipsa manus Apostolorum tam extiterit, cum Quintilianus dicat suo Tempore extitisse manum Ciceronis, Gellius Virgilij suo Tempore. *Id. in Annot.*

See the Bishop of London's third *Pastoral Letter*, p. 64.

^d *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac. 4^{to}, p. 347.*

port is true; and if it shall appear in the first Place, that they report him to have had a *Spirit of Prophecy*^e, and a *Power of Miracles*, which no Man can have but from God alone; and secondly, That they could not be mistaken themselves, nor have combined to cheat the World by an invented Story; the Consequence will be, that they are Witnesses of *God's Attestation to Jesus* perfectly unexceptionable, since there is no room to question either their *Knowledge*, or *Veracity*.

Ist then, They declare that their Master had a *Spirit of Prophecy*, and a *Power of Miracles*.

As to a *Spirit of Prophecy*, we read that he foretold several Events which could not be *foreseen by human Sagacity*; and several, which could not be *effected by human Power*.

He foretold, for instance, that he should die by *Crucifixion*; that *the chief Priests would deliver him to the Gentiles to crucify him*^f; that, *as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so should he be lifted up*^g; and

^e Huetius's Definition of *Prophecy* is this; *Prophetia est Narratio rerum futurarum, quæ nondum contigerant eo Tempore quo Prophetia illa edita est, quæque ex Naturalibus Causis prævideri non possunt.* And his fourth *Axiom*^h is, that, *Omnis Prophetica Facultas est a Deo.* *Demonst. Evang.* p. 10, 21. 8^{vo}.

^f Mat. xx. 18, 19. Mark x. 33, 34.

^g John iii. 14.

suffer

SERMON III. 69

suffer that kind of Death from the Hands of the *Romans*, which they used to inflict on their worst Malefactors.

Now this was beyond the reach of any Man to foresee. For the *Jews* whom he had enraged by his Pretensions and Doctrine, were most furious in their Zeal against those, whom they took to be ill-affected to *Moses*, and their *Law*; and they used to dispatch them immediately in the Transports of their Rage, and to waste no Time in Ceremony or Deliberation. They stoned *Stephen* and *St. Paul*^h; and they several Times attempted to lay violent Hands on our Saviour, and to murder him at onceⁱ. Who could think therefore that when they had him in their Power, and full Liberty was given them to do with him as they would, they should refuse to execute him as their Law directed, and should wait for his Trial, and run the Hazard of his Acquittal, by the *Roman Governor*^k? Who could imagine that they should be the Instruments of fulfilling his Prophecy, and should procure its Accomplishment by their clamorous

^h Acts vii. 59. xiv. 19.

ⁱ Luk. iv. 29. Joh. v. 16, 18. viii. 59. x. 31, 39. xi. 53, 57.

^k Joh. xviii. 31, 32. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your Law. The *Jews* therefore said unto him: It is not lawful for us to put any Man to death: That the saying of *Jesus* might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying WHAT DEATH he should die.

Importunity^l, in demanding his Crucifixion of *Pilate*, and forcing him in a manner to comply with their Demand? Who could conceive before it happened, that *Pilate* would condemn a Man to death, whom he pronounced at the same Time to be innocent^m? That he would act a Part so flagrantly infamous and wicked? or could be prevailed upon to do it, by any Outcries, or Importunities whateverⁿ? The extreme Unlikelihood of these Things is a manifest Proof that they were beyond the reach of *human Foresight*, and that they could not be foretold but by vertue of the *Divine Knowledge*^o.

In like manner our Saviour foretold the *Destruction of the Temple*.

The *Jews* had a Notion^p that this Structure should, like the Earth, abide for ever;

^l Luk. xxiii. 29. *And they were instant with loud Voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the VOICES of them, and of the Chief Priests PREVAILED. And Pilate gave Sentence that it should be, as they required.*

^m Luke xxiii. 14. *Ye have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverteth the People, and behold I having examin'd him before you have found NO FAULT in this Man touching those Things whereof ye accuse him.*

ⁿ Mat. xxvii. 24. *When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a Tumult was made, he took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, saying, I am innocent of the Blood of this JUST PERSON: See ye to it.*

^o See *Jenkins's Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I. p. 253. And

Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 464.

^p *Philo de Monarch.* cited by *Bishop Chandler*, p. 471.

and

and the Disciples were tinctured with the like Sentiment ^q. They came to our Saviour, and, in Admiration of its wonderful Strength, said to him, *Master, see what manner of Stones, and what Buildings are here!* To which he replied, *There shall not be left one Stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down*^r, which accordingly came to pass within less than forty Years.

And yet when he foretold it, there was no Probability that it would happen: For the *Jews* were then upon good Terms with the *Romans*. As they acknowledged *Cæsar's* Power, and submitted to his *Procurator*; so they had *Cæsar's* Favour and Protection. And yet if they had been at war with the *Romans*, and the Temple had been actually besieged, it was vastly unlikely that it should be utterly demolished, since it was one of the most impregnable Citadels in the World^s. Notwithstanding all this, it was destroyed according to our Saviour's Prediction, and that by a very remarkable Providence.

^q For when our Saviour told them that the Temple should be destroyed, they thought that the Destruction of it would not happen, but together with the End of the World. Matt. xxiv. 3.

^r Mark xiii. 1, 2.

^s This is reported by *Josephus* in his 7th Book of the Wars of the *Jews*; and so are the other Particulars concerning a common Soldier's setting fire to the Temple, and *Titus's* endeavouring to save it, and the Reflections he made when he had taken the City.

See Bishop *Candler's* Defence of Christianity, p. 472.

The *Jews* within a while brought the *Romans* upon them by their Rebellion; and when the General came before the Temple, he had neither Hope nor Desire to destroy it. He laboured all he could with the Besieged not to lay him under a Necessity of attempting it; and when he could not prevail upon them, he ordered his own Soldiers to spare the Building. But neither the Severity of the *Roman* Discipline, nor the natural Love of Plunder, could hinder a common Soldier from setting it on fire. The renowned *Titus* still would have saved it, earnestly striving to extinguish the Flame; but it could not be done: And seeing so many Accidents conspire to bring about a Ruin, which his Power of itself could not effect, and which his Councils were employed to prevent, he declared them to be so many Marks of Divine Vengeance. Upon his Survey of the Works, after he became Master of them, he owned it to be the Hand of God, which suffered the *Jews* to relinquish Castles, from which no human Force could have driven them, and which no military Machines were capable to batter. So impossible was it for *human* Eye to foresee, what our Saviour predicted *.

It

* Several other Things of this kind were foretold by him; such as the Treachery of *Judas*; the Denial of *St. Peter*; the

It is observable farther, that he foretold several Events, which in all *human Account* were *absolutely impossible*.

He foretold, for instance, that within three Days after his *Crucifixion*^u, he would rise from the Dead; which was impossible to happen, but by the *immediate Agency* of God. For to restore Life is the incommunicable Prerogative of him who gave it. It is beyond the Activity of *any Creature*, and unproportionate to the Power of a *finite Agent*. This is a Work which he has reserved to his peculiar Operation; and therefore as it could not possibly be foreseen, so no Man in his Senses would presume to foretel it, unless he had God's Authority for so doing. And yet our Saviour not only foretold it, but put the Truth of his Mission upon its coming to pass*: He laid the whole

the Manner of his Martyrdom; the Desertion and Flight of all his Disciples; the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, with all the extraordinary Circumstances attending it; and *John's* Survival of this Destruction. All which could not be discovered by *human Sagacity*, and yet came to pass in Pursuance of his *Prediction*.

^u Mat. xvi. 21. xvii. 22, 23. xx. 19.

* Joh. ii. 18, 19. *Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What Sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these Things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raise it up. That is, by this Token ye shall know that I am a true Prophet of God, and authorised by him to vindicate his House from Profanation, ye shall dissolve this Body of mine, separating it from the Soul, and in three Days I will raise it up, uniting it to the Soul again.*

Weight

Weight of his Cause upon this Event; and accordingly he rose from the Dead, in pursuance of his Prediction, and gave the most illustrious and convincing Proof of his *Divine Authority*.

In like manner, he foretold that when he left the World, and returned unto the Father who sent him, he would not leave his Apostles *comfortless*, but would endue them by the Descent of the *Holy Ghost*, with Courage and Ability to preach his Doctrine in all the World. And yet this could not be done, but by the signal Interposition of God's Power. For that a few plain and illiterate Men should on a sudden be enabled to speak all Languages, and to converse with People of every Nation under Heaven; that they should ever think of travelling over the Earth, and carrying their Testimony to the several Parts of it; that they should ever hope for gaining any Credit, and succeeding in the prodigious Enterprize; that they should encounter all Opposition, and endure all Hardship, with an unshaken Spirit, and

Joh. xiv. 19. Yet a little while, and the World seeth me no more.

xvi. 5. Now I go my way to him that sent me; but I will send the Comforter unto you: And, Ye shall receive

Acts. i. 8. Power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be Witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost Parts of the Earth.

over-

SERMON III. 75

overcome the World, though joined in Association against them; these Things could not have been done by any conceivable Power of their own, nor can they be accounted for but from the special Influence of God upon their Minds. And yet our Saviour foretold them, though requiring *God's Agency* to effect; and his *Prophecy* was gloriously fulfilled on the Day of *Pentecost*^z.

So again he foretold, that his Apostles should confirm their Doctrine by *miraculous Works*^a; which was impossible for them to do without the *Aid of God's Power*. And accordingly we read, that *God wrought special Miracles by their Hands*^b, and *confirmed the Word which they preached with Signs following*^c. They cured the Lame and the Blind, and healed all manner of Diseases in the most publick Places of *Jerusalem*, before great Multitudes of People, and on Persons the most remarkable for their Infirmities. Their miraculous Power was so publickly known, and so greatly admired, that *the People brought forth the Sick into the Streets, and laid them on Beds and Couches, that at the least the Shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them: There came also Multitudes out of the Cities round about unto Jerusalem,*

^z Acts ii. 1, 4.

^b Acts xix. 11.

^a Acts v. 15, 16.

^a Mark xvi. 17, 18.

^c Mark xvi. 18.

bringing

bringing sick Folks, and them which were vexed with unclean Spirits, and they were healed every one. The like Miracles they perform'd in the several Nations to which they travelled^f; and they enabled others to do the same Works. They communicated to them the miraculous Power with which they were endued; and it continued in the Church for two Ages after them. *Tertullian* appeals to it in a *publick Apology*; and gives a solemn Challenge to his Heathen Adversaries to put the Question between them upon this Issue. Most evident it is that these Miracles could not have been wrought but by the *Divine Power*, nor therefore have been foretold but by the *Divine Knowledge*.

Lastly, Our Saviour foretold that his Religion should spread itself over the World in spite of all Opposition^h, and be set up in the room of *Pagan Idolatry*. And yet naturally speaking, nothing could be more impossible than this Event. For Christianity could no otherwise gain Ground in the World, than by subduing the most powerful Enemies combined against it, like the *Israelites* who fought their Way into the promised Land, and could not advance a Step in it, but by a successful Battle with

^f *Jenkins's* Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion. Vol. I. p. 293.

Grotius de Verit. Chr. Rel. Lib. 3. c. 7.

^g Apol. c. 23. See *Reeves's* Notes, p. 278.

^h Matt. xvi. 18. xxiv. 14. xxviii. 19.

the Inhabitantsⁱ. The Prejudices and Vices, the Interests and Authority of Mankind were leagued together to oppose the Gospel, and hinder its Progress; and yet it had no natural Power, either to reconcile them to it, or to overcome their Efforts against it. It was, by its Strictness, disagreeable and forbidding to the *Heathens*, and proposed with all the Circumstances of Disadvantage. It prescribed the Denial of those Appetites, which they were used freely to indulge, and disallowed those sensual Pleasures which they were used freely to enjoy. It promised no Advantages in this World to allure them to it, nor any Reward in the next, but what was to them *unconceivable* and *incredible*^k. Its Publishers were mean and illiterate Men; of neither Birth, nor Education, nor Experience; not skilled in the Arts of Subtilty, or the Ornaments of Eloquence to recommend their Doctrine; and besides were odious to the *Gentiles* for their *national Customs*.

How then was it possible, that a Religion, so unlikely upon all Accounts to make any Progress, should yet be embraced by the

ⁱ This Argument is extremely well managed by Bishop Chandler in his Defence of Christianity, p. 476.

^k Pearson on the Creed, p. 91. Edit. 5. where it is shewn, that whether we consider the *Nature* of the Doctrine taught, or the *Condition* of the Teachers of it; or the *Manner* in which it was taught, it can no Way seem probable, that it should have such Success, but by the immediate working of the Hand of God, acknowledging Jesus for his Son.

Heathens, and prevail over their *Idolatry*? Certainly, this could not be done but by the *singular Interposal* of God; and yet our Saviour foretold it, however *humanly* impossible; and we have long Experience to convince us that his Prediction was true.

If therefore he foretold several Events which could not be foreseen by *human Sagacity*; and several which could not be effected by *human Power*, it is evident that his Ability to foretel them was derived from God, and therefore that God communicated to him his *own Knowledge*.

Now as the Apostles attest him to have had a *Spirit of Prophecy*, so likewise a *Power of working Miracles*; which we are now secondly to consider.

They report him to have performed such Works, as manifestly exceed all *human Ability*; as surpass the Power of any Agent but God himself, or some intelligent Being commissioned by him. We read, for Instance, that he gave *Sight to the Blind*¹, *Feet to the Lamē*^m, *Speech to the Dumb*ⁿ, and *Life to the Dead*^o: that he *went about healing all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Disease among the People*^p, only by a *Word of*

¹ Matt. ix. 27. xx. 30.

^m Matt. xi. 4, 5. xxi. 14.

ⁿ Matt. ix. 32, 33. xii. 22. Mark vii. 32.

^o Matt. ix. 18. xi. 4, 5. Luke vii. 12. Joh. xi. 43, 44.

^p Matt. iv. 23, 24.

Authority. We read that he performed these wonderful Works in the most *publick Manner*; in Places of the greatest Concourse; in the midst of his most subtle and implacable Enemies; before Crowds of People, who followed him from the Places of their Abode, and were both Eye-Witnesses and Partakers of their salutary Vertue; upon Persons who had long been remarkable for their Infirmities; and upon People of all Sorts, who, by Profession or Dependence, were Adversaries to his Doctrine. So that no Question can be made, but that they were really performed. It is impossible that so many Witnesses; so many watchful and malicious Spectators should be deceived by *Artifice*; impossible, that such Multitudes of People, that Strangers and Enemies to him, should become his *Confederates*, and feign their Diseases or their Cure, to advance his

* In *Jerusalem*, for instance, at the Time of the Passover, Joh. ii. 23. iv. 45. v. 8.

* Matt. xv. 30, 31. xiv. 21. xv. 38.

* Bishop *Chandler* well observes, that "the Persons on whom the Miracles were wrought, were Strangers to him, and to one another. They were in Religion most opposite; divided in Opinion, Affection and Nation, and of Sects most jealous of each other. They were *Roman* Soldiers, *Syrian* Gentiles, and Worshippers at *Jerusalem*, *Jews* and *Samaritans*, unbelieving *Sadducees*, and stubborn *Pharisees*; *Rulers of the Synagogues*; *Herod's* Courtiers, and Officers of the *Sanhedrim*: All, by Profession or Dependence great Enemies of Christ and his Doctrine; yet some of all partook of the Benefit of his Miracles. *Defence of Christianity*, p. 426.

Reputation. We read besides, that the Rulers of the *Jews* examined some of his Works with the utmost Strictness, and used all the Means in their Power to find out if there was any Deceit in them^t; and yet after all, they were convinced of their *Reality*^u: They confessed that *he did many Miracles*; and St. Peter told them plainly, when he was summoned before them, that they themselves knew that *Jesus of Nazareth was a Man approved of God among them by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs*^x; and therefore his Works were not *Appearances* only, effected by Craft or Confederacy, but *real Operations*: He did not by Dexterity or Combination give them the Air of *Realities* but he *actually* performed them.

Now it is certain that they exceeded all *human Ability*, and could have no other Agent but God himself, or some intelligent Being commissioned by him.

1st, They manifestly exceeded all *human Ability*.

The curing of Diseases, of malignant inveterate Diseases, the *Opprobria Medicorum* as shewing the Defect of their Art, the curing of such Diseases in an instant, without the Application of any Remedy, is with Men certainly impossible. The healing of a Woman, for instance, who for the Cure

^t Joh. ix.

^u Joh. xi. 47.

^x Acts ii. 22.

of a Distemper *had spent all her Money upon Physicians* ¹, and was nothing bettered by their Prescriptions, but rather grew worse; the Removal of this Infirmary, too stubborn for all the Art of *Hippocrates*, only by a Touch of his Garment, is most plainly *supernatural*. The giving Sight to the Blind; Feet to the Lame, and Speech to the Dumb, who were severally *born with these Defects*, is undeniably beyond human Skill to effect. How shall we account for the curing of a blind Man, by anointing his Eyes with Clay ²? This was a strange Remedy one would think, and more likely to take away the Sight, than to restore it. And yet it produced the Effect, which in all *human Probability* it was more fitted to prevent.

The raising of the Dead particularly is beyond the Activity of any *Creature*. This is the peculiar Prerogative of God. He alone who is the Author of Life can possibly restore it: The Soul, when separated from the Body, is for certain more *immediately* in the Hand of God; is placed by him in some particular Repository, there to abide till the general Resurrection; and therefore no created Power can take it out of his Custody, or remove it from the Abode to which he has

¹ Luk. viii. 43.

² Joh. ix. 6, 7. N. B. Mr. *Woolston's* Exceptions to this Miracle are fully answered and refuted by Bishop *Smallbroke* in his *Vindication*, Vol. II.

allotted it. So that the mighty Works of our Saviour could not be wrought by *human Ability*.

Nor 2dly, could they have any other Agent but God himself, or some intelligent Being commissioned by him.

The *Jews* indeed, being unable to deny the reality of the Facts, ascribed them to the Power of *Beelzebub*; and the *Heathens*, for the same Reason, to a magical Correspondence with some *Demon*.

But as to *evil Spirits*, it is certain in the *first* Place, that they would not have wrought these Miracles if they could.

For, as our Saviour himself argues upon this Point, *Every Kingdom divided against it self is brought to Desolation; and every City or House divided against itself, shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself: How shall then his Kingdom stand?* That is, it is not imaginable that the Devil assisted our Saviour in *casting out Devils*, because then he would have acted against himself, in Opposition to his own Interest and Designs, and his Kingdom by that Means *would be brought to Desolation*.

And for the same Reason it is incredible, that he assisted him in any other of his Works. For as they confirmed his Doctrine, the Drift of which was to *turn Men from*

* Mat. xii. 25, 26.

Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God^b, if Satan had been aiding in their Performance, he must have acted contrary to his own Interest, and exerted his Power to the Destruction of his Empire.

The Doctrine of Christ directly aimed to abolish the Dominion, and subvert the Kingdom of the Devil^c. It prescribed the most holy and spiritual Worship of the Deity; the most pure and rational Morality. It directed Men to abstain from all those Actions; those barbarous and impure Ceremonies in their Worship, and those flagrant and abominable Vices in their common Life, which the Devil had suggested to them. It taught them to renounce any kind of Commerce with him, and to profess the utmost Enmity and Detestation of him. It charged them under the severest Penalty to avoid every Work which he approved, and it encouraged them to oppose him with all their Might, by the Promise of the greatest Reward. If therefore the *Devil* had assisted to confirm this Doctrine, and thereby to engage Mens Submission to it, he must have been *divided against himself*, and have conspired to put an End to his Kingdom; which is utterly incredible.

^b Acts xxvi. 18.

^c Grotius de Verit. Chr. Rel. lib. 2. c. 5.

But 2dly, It is equally certain in the next Place, that *evil Spirits* could not have performed the Works of Christ if they would. They were Works really miraculous, and such as required *Almighty Power* to effect. For ^d *a true Miracle is properly a supernatural Operation, disagreeing with and repugnant to the usual Course of Things, and the known Laws of Nature, either in respect of the Subject Matter, that is, the Things effected, which are naturally impossible, as the removing, for Instance, of natural Blindness; or in respect of the Manner of Performance, such as healing of Diseases meerly by the speaking of a Word. And as our Saviour wrought many Miracles of both these Kinds, so neither of them could be done by a limited Power, "No less Power than what is "infinite, being able to overcome the otherwise insuperable Difficulties, and natural "Impossibilities that attend them."* To suppose therefore that *evil Spirits* might perform them, is to suppose, that Creatures, or finite Agents have an equal Power with God himself, which is a plain Contradiction. And if they cannot be ascribed to *evil Spirits*, the Consequence is clear, that they were performed by the Power of God.

^d Bishop Smallbroke's *Vindication*, Vol. I. p. 11.

* Id. p. 12.

But

But God for certain would not have so signally stretched out his Arm in behalf of Christ, and for the Confirmation of his Doctrine, if he had been a Deceiver; for it is observable that *he did the Works which no other Man ever did*^f. In him was manifested a superior Degree of Divine Power. "Great and many were the Miracles which " *Moses* and the rest of the Prophets wrought " for the Ratification of the Law, and the " Demonstration of God's constant Presence " with his People; and yet all those wrought " by so many several Persons in the Space " of above three thousand Years, are far " short of those which this one Jesus did " perform within the Compass of three " Years. The ambitious Diligence of the " *Jews* hath reckoned up seventy six Miracles for *Moses*, and seventy four for all the " rest of the Prophets; and supposing that " they were so many (though indeed they " were not) how few are they in respect of " those which are written of our Saviour? " How inconsiderable if compared with all " which he wrought? When St. *John* testifieth with as great Certainty of Truth, " as Height of *Hyperbole*, that *there are many " other Things which Jesus did, the which if " they should be written every one, HE supposed " that even the World itself could not contain " the Books that should be written*^g."

^f Joh. xv. 24.

^g Pearson on the Creed, Edit. 5. p. 86.

Therefore as so eminent a Degree of Divine Power was communicated to him, this is an incontestable Proof of his Divine Mission; since we cannot suppose that God would have confirmed in such a manner the Pretensions of a false Prophet, or have given such an illustrious Sanction to a Forgery.

God indeed may permit *evil Spirits* to do *Signs and Wonders*, or may perhaps exert his own Power in a lesser Degree, either for the *Trial*, or the *Punishment* of Men; either to try, whether they will disregard a Mission confirmed by a *superior Power*; or to *punish* them for such Disregard.

An Instance of his doing this for the *Trial* of Men, is in the Case of *Moses*, and the *Magicians of Egypt*. They performed several preternatural Works as well as *Moses*. They appeared for some Time to have an equal Power, and therefore equal Authority with him. But then God enabled him to do what they could not. He manifested a Power far superior to theirs: He forced them to confess that the *Finger of God* ^s was in the Works of *Moses*; and as he thus confirmed the Authority of *Moses* in Opposition to the *Magicians*, so the Wonders he permitted them to do, were for the *Trial* of *Pharaoh* and his People ^b.

An

^s Exod. viii. 19.

^b With respect to the *Trial* of Men is that Passage in *Deute-*

An Instance of his acting in this manner for the *Punishment* of Men, we meet with in the second Chapter of the second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*; where it is said of a certain *wicked one*, eminently so called, that, *his coming is after the working of Satan, with all Power and Signs, and lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the Love of the Truth*; that is, that he should do many surprizing and wonderful Things, and should in fact deceive those who received not the Love of the Gospel; God suffering them to be imposed on by false Pretences, as a *Punishment* ^k for their slighting that Doctrine,

Deuteronomy to be understood, which speaks of the arising of a Prophet, or a Dreamer of Dreams, and giving a Sign or a Wonder, to tempt the People to go after other Gods, and serve them. For it immediately follows, *Thou shalt not hearken to that Prophet, or that Dreamer of Dreams, for the Lord your God PROVETH you, to know whether you love the Lord your God.*

ⁱ xiii. 1, 2, 3. See *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac.* p. 851.

^k With respect to the *Punishment* of Men may those Passages be understood, which speak of the arising of false Christs and false Prophets, and of their shewing great Signs and Wonders, inasmuch as (if it were possible) to deceive the very Elect, *Matt. xxiv. 24. Mark xiii. 21.*

God might justly permit false Christs to arise, and to do Signs and Wonders, to punish the great Infidelity of the *Jews*, who would not believe in Christ, notwithstanding those frequent and apparent Miracles which he did, infinitely transcending those of any such Pretenders. Such among the *Jews* were *Jonathan*, after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; and *Barchanebas* in the Time of *Adrian*; and

Doctrine, which had been most fully confirmed to them. But still it is not imaginable, that God would ever permit the highest Appearances of his Authority, to give Credit to an Impostor. For if he should, there would be no Way open for discovering the Cheat; no Means left for guarding us against it, but he would be aiding to impose on Mankind an unavoidable Delusion, in an Affair of the highest Consequence to them; which is no more consistent with his Veracity and Goodness, than ceasing to exist is with his necessary Existence. Therefore it remains, that the mighty Works of our Saviour were wrought by the Power of God, and undeniably prove his Divine Mission.

Now as the Apostles affirm that their Master had a *Spirit of Prophecy*, and a *Power of Miracles*, which no Man can have but from God alone; so secondly we are to consider, that their Testimony *must be true*; because they could not have been mistaken themselves, nor have combined to cheat the World by an *invented Story*.

several others in *Agypt*, *Cyprus* and *Crete*; and in latter Times, the famous *David el David*, together with several more mentioned by *Maimonides*; the Issue of them all was only a farther Aggravation of the Miseries of the poor *Jews*, who were so *credulous* in following *Impostors*, and yet such *strange Infidels*, where they had plain and undoubted Miracles to persuade their Belief. *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac.* p. 341.

Such likewise were the *false Prophets* who arose among them *before the Temple was burnt*.

See *Hammond's Annotations on the 24th of Matt.* Note d.

It

It is impossible they should have been mistaken in the Actions they attribute to him, because they were assured of them by their *own Senses*. They heard the *Prophecies*, and saw the *Miracles* themselves. They had *personal Knowledge* of both; and their united Experience of every Thing they reported, rendered them as infallibly certain of it, as it is possible for Men to be in any Case whatsoever.

They were not *heedless* and *incurious*, which might render them liable to Mistake; but extremely careful to be truly informed. In the Case, for instance, of their Master's *Resurrection*, the great *Test* of his *Divine Mission*, they were exceedingly backward to believe it. They were so diffident, that our Saviour *upbraided them with their Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart, because they believed not them who had seen him after he was risen*¹. They used all the Means to prevent a Mistake, which any Unbeliever can think proper for that End^m. They would not believe

¹ Mark xvi. 14.

^m It was purposely so ordered, says Dr. *Jenkins*, by the Divine Providence, that they might not readily know and acknowledge him; but that the manner of the Manifestation of himself to them, might be an invincible Argument against all Opposers, that no Man might have any thing to object, when every Circumstance was as narrowly examined, and with as great Caution, and Circumspection, and Diffidence, as it could have been by himself, if he had been there. For I think, we may safely challenge the boldest and subtlest Adversary,

believe upon Report, nor be satisfied with any thing but *sensible* Evidence; and when he first appeared to them, they did not *presently* believe, but *thought they had seen a Spirit*^a; and though he assured them, that it was *he himself*: that, *a Spirit had not Flesh and Bones as they saw him to have*; and also gave them leave, to *handle his Body*, and feel the Print of the Nails^o; yet still *they believed not for Joy, but wondred*^r. Their Joy made them fearful of a Mistake, and still suspicious of Disappointment^s. But yet they were thoroughly satisfied before he left them^t; and they saw him several Times afterwards met together in a Body^f. They ate

Adversary, to say what he could have done more to discover the Truth, if he had been then living, and among the Apostles, than was done by them. *Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I. p. 269.

^a Luke xxiv. 37.

^o Ver. 39.

^r Ver. 41.

^s Animi fuere incerti, quia ita fere omnes sumus, ut quod vehementer cupimus esse verum, id difficulter credamus, ac metuamus semper, ne in falsum conjiciamur gaudium. *Voss. Harm. Evang. Lib. 3. c. 4. P. 397. 4.^o*

^t He asked them, *Whether they had any Meat? And they gave him a piece of a brailed Fish, and of an Honey Comb.— And he took it, and did eat before them.* And then they attended to his Discourse, and they told *Thomas*, who was not then with them, *that they had seen the Lord.* Luke xxiv. 42, 43, 44. Joh. xx. 25.

^f First, At *Jerusalem*, eight Days after this Appearance, when *Thomas* was present with them. *Joh. xx. 26. to 30.*

Secondly,

ate and drank with him, and *knew that it was the Lord*. They conversed with him for a considerable Time together. They *worshipped him*; when he appeared to them in

Secondly, In *Galilee*, where he had promised to see them, and had directed them to go for that Purpose, *Mat. xxviii. 10. Joh. xxi. to Verse the 23d.*

Thirdly, In *Galilee* too; on *Mount Tabor* probably, where he was transfigured; the holy Mount, as *St. Peter* calls it, *2 Ep. i. 18. Matt. xxviii. 16.*

Fourthly, In the Place, either still *Galilee*, or *Jerusalem*, from whence he led them out to *Bethany*, where he ascended visibly into Heaven. *Luke xxiv. 49.*

* *Matt. xxviii. 17.* The Words in our Translation are: *And when they saw him, they worshipped him*: BUT SOME DOUBTED. Which seem to intimate that some doubted at that Time: But the true meaning is, that some *had doubted before*. None of the *Eleven* did doubt at that Time, which was after *Thomas* had received Satisfaction, and had cried out in the fulness of Conviction, *My Lord, and my God*. But they all of them doubted at first, and *Thomas* more than the rest: which is the Thing intended by *St. Matthew*. The Words in the *Original* are, *ei dē idōntes*, ubi illud *idōntes* est *Aoristus*, qui, & imperfecti, & perfecti, & plusquam-perfecti, habet significationem. Quare *ei dē idōntes* cum *Grotio* verterim, *Quidam autem addubitaverant*. Antea puta, & in iis præcipue *Thomas*. *Voss. Harm. Evang. p. 410. 4^{to}.*

Upon this doubting of the Apostles at first, excellent are the Words of *Radulphus Ardentius*, cited by *Vossius*, which I think worthy of a Transcript. Quare, Fratres mei, Dominus electos Discipulos suos permisit de sua Resurrectione tamdiu dubitare? Non hæc frustra; sed providā & utili hæc nobis permisit Dispensatione. Plus nobis quippe profuerunt illi, qui tarde, & vix crediderunt. Creduli nempe facile credunt, etiam rei nondum probatæ. Increduli vero e contra rei multimodis probatæ vix credere volunt. Quis ergo non credat, quod etiam increduli non credere non potuerunt? Quis non eredat, quod etiam *Thomas* incredulus Visu proprio, & attrectatu manûs diligenti, credere compulsum est?—Credamus ergo, Fratres, absque dubitatione, quod

in *Galilee*. They saw his Ascension into Heaven; and they staid at *Jerusalem* for the Descent of the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of his Orders. So that it is absolutely impossible they could be deceived; and if there was no Mistake in this grand Event of his Life, we have the less Reason to suspect any Mistake in the rest. And therefore they are Witnesses in Point of *Knowledge* entirely unexceptionable.

Now, as their *Knowledge* is unexceptionable, so secondly, their *Veracity* is the same. There is no room to suspect that they invented a magnificent Story of their Master, and published it to cheat Mankind into his Religion. We have all the Evidence of the contrary that can be desired. We are certain that they neither *would have projected*, nor *could have executed* such a Design. Many are the Reasons which assure us, that it is not only *morally impossible* they should have attempted to deceive the World by a Fable, but likewise, *naturally impossible* they should have succeeded in such Attempt, supposing they had undertaken it.

These Reasons are as follow.

First, Because they had no manner of

quod etiam increduli crediderunt; & agamus Deo Gratias, qui ideo Discipulos suos dubitare voluit, ne nos dubitaremus; ideo eos ad Tempus incredulos esse voluit, ne nos increduli essemus. *Harm. Ev. p. 401.*

Temptation

Temptation to project such a Fraud ^u, and to engage in so wicked an Enterprize. They had *nothing to hope for*, but *much to fear* from so doing; and however wicked Men may be for the sake of worldly Interest, yet to be wicked upon no other View, but that of Misery and Distress, is *perfectly unnatural*.

Secondly, Because they endured all kinds of Outrage and Persecution, and submitted unanimously to the most cruel Deaths for the sake of their Report. Though Wit and Malice conspired together to find out Deaths of the greatest Anguish, yet not a Man was terrified to retract. No! not one ever betrayed the least Suspicion of an Imposture; but they met every Trial with an unshaken Spirit, and sealed their Testimony with their Blood. And is it imaginable that *so many* Persons should thus resolutely persist in attesting a Falshood? That they should, for the sake of a *Lye*, undergo those Torments, which often force other Men to *abjure the Truth*? That they should not only ruin themselves in this World, but also *damn* themselves in the next upon their *own Principles*? Is there any Thing in the Nature of Man that can prompt him to act thus? or

^u Qui Testes ex parte Voluntatis refellunt, necesse est aliquid adferant, quo Voluntatem credibile fit a vero dicendo diverti. Id autem hic dici non potest. *Grat. de Verit. Lib. 3. c. 6.* Nemo gratis malus est. *Id. Lib. 2. c. 6.*

94 SERMON III.

did ever any Man act so since the World began? We have heard indeed of Criminals^x, who have asserted their Innocence to the last, and died with a Falshood in their Mouths. But in this Case it is plain, that they acted upon a Motive of Self-Preservation, and persisted in the Falshood to save their Lives. Whereas in the Case of the Apostles, they exposed themselves to Death by their Attestation, and then persisted in it, not to save themselves from Death, but to suffer it rather than recant.

Thirdly, Because they were absolutely incapable of contriving and executing so *vast a Project*, as the changing the Religion of all Nations by the propagating of an *invented Story*^y. They were placed in a Condition of Life, which rendered them the least apt to design, and the least qualified to attempt an Undertaking of this kind. A Company of poor Fishermen could never think of overthrowing the *established Religions* of the World, or entertain the Ambition of being the Authors of a new one; or, supposing that so excessive a Vanity could enter into their Heads, yet they could never concert the proper Measures for such a *prodigious* Enterprize; could neither form a new

^x See the *Vindication of Christ's Miracles*, Part I. p. 9.

^y See Dr. Rogers's Sermons p. 143, where this Point is excellently handled.

System of Religion, nor settle the Parts they were to act in the Propagation of it; nor hope that they should be able to perform them with requisite Constancy.

Fourthly, Because they put it out of their Power to impose on Mankind by a Forgery, supposing they could possibly have designed it. They reported the Transactions of Christ first in ² *Jerusalem*, in that very City where he lived; and they reported them within a few Days after he left the World. They told the *Jews*, that the Person who had so lately appeared among them as a *Prophet*, and whom they had executed for assuming that Character, was a Person approved of God by all kinds of Miracles which he did: that, he had wrought them in such, and such Places of their City, and on such particular People; and that, he was raised up from the Dead, notwithstanding all the Care they had taken to secure him in his Grave. The *Jews* could certainly discover whether these Facts were really true; and if they had found the Report of them to be false, they would have published the Cheat with Triumph;

² Acts i. 8.

* On the Day of *Pentecost*, which was ten Days after Christ's Ascension, St. Peter said to the *Jews*; Ye Men of Israel, hear these Words; Jesus of Nazareth a Man approved of God among you, by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your selves also know. Acts ii. 22.

and

and the Knowledge of it would have been conveyed from them to other Nations.

Fifthly, Because several Particulars of the History of our Saviour related by the Apostles, are attested both by *Heathen* and *Jewish* Writers^b. Many Events relating to him, and

^b The *Particulars* of the Life of *Jesus*, which have been attested by *Jewish* and *Heathen* Writers, in Agreement with the History of the New Testament, are specified by *Grotius*, *Huetius*, and the late *Dr. Clark*.

Grot. de Verit. Chr. Relig. lib. 2. c. 1.

Huet. Demonst. Evang. Propos. 3^a.

Clark's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 322. Edit. 2.

One of these Particulars is, that *Herod slew all the Children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the Coasts thereof, from two Years old and under.* *Matt. ii. 16.*

This Cruelty of *Herod* is attested by *Macrobius* a *Pagan* Writer of the fourth Century, whose Words are these. *Cum audisset [Augustus] inter Pueros, quos in Syria Herodes Rex Judæorum intra bimatum iussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum, ait, Melius esse Herodis porcum quam Filium.* *Macrobi. Saturn. lib. 2. c. 4.*

The *Deists* have lately taken much Pains to invalidate this Testimony of *Macrobius*. But their Pretences have been examined and confuted by the very learned Bishop of *Durham*, in his *Vindication of the Defence of Christianity*, p. 461; and by the learned *Mr. Masson*, in his *Vindication of that historical Relation of the Gospel*.

The Pretences advanced by *Grotius* in his *Annotations* are fully answered by *Huetius* in his *Demon. Evang. Propos. 9^a. p. 711. 8^{vo}.* who concludes his Answer thus: *Constat ergo hac in parte sua Fides MACROBIO, qui illustri Testimonio Evangelicam hanc Historiam asseruit.*

Secondly, Another Particular is, that the Sun was miraculously darkned at the Time of our Saviour's Crucifixion, *Matt. xxvii. 45. Joh. xix. 31.*

This Fact was attested by the publick Registers of *Rome*, as *Tertullian* says, *Eum Mundi Casum in Arcanis vestris habetis*, *Apol. c. 21. This Wonder of the World you have related,*
and

and many Transactions of his Life, which those his Followers report, are reported also by Authors who had no Attachment to him. Many of his *Miracles* particularly, such as, his healing the *Lame*, and *Blind*, and *casting out Devils*, are acknowledged by the greatest Enemies of Christianity; by *Celsus* and *Julian*, and the Authors of the *Jewish Talmud* c.

and the Relation preserved in your Archives to this Day. Reeves's Translation, p. 261.

The same Fact is attested by *Phlegon*, a Freed Man of the Emperor *Adrian*, in his 13th Book of *Olympiads*. The learned *Gerard Vossius* has attempted to shew that the *Eclipse* mentioned by *Phlegon*, is not the same with that recorded by the Evangelists. But *Huetius* has answered his Pleas. One Reason which *Vossius* offers for his Opinion, is, that the *Eclipse* which *Phlegon* mentions, was thought by him to be *natural*. But *Huetius* shews this to be a Mistake; for the Word *ἐκλειψις* used by *Phlegon* signifies any Defect of the Sun, whether *natural*, or *extraordinary*. Besides, *Africanus* represents *Phlegon* to have said, that the *Eclipse* happened in the *Full of the Moon*; that is, *supernaturally*; and *Philoponus* reports *Phlegon's* Words to be, that it was such an *Eclipse* as never before happened, *Demonst. Evang. Propol. 3^a. c. 9.*

The other Objection of *Vossius*, is, that no one has mentioned this *Eclipse* but *Phlegon*.

But *Eusebius* says, that he found it in other Books of the Heathens, *Euseb. Chron. p. 158.*

Among whom, says *Huetius*, is *Thallus*, according to *Africanus*; and the *Chinese*, according to *Gressonius*, *Propol. 3^a. c. 8. & 9.*

The Story of *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* is indeed *fabulous*, as *Huetius* allows, and so does *Vossius*.

Epistolæ de Dionysio & Apollophane omnino sunt υποβολιμαίαι. Harm. Evang. p. 311. 4^{to}. See also *Cave's Hist. Liter. p. 15.*

c *Grotius de Verit. Rel. Chr. lib. 2. c. 5. in Annot.*

Huet. Demonst. Evang. Prop. 9^{na}. c. 39.

H

Lastly,

Lastly, Because they wrought *Miracles* in *Confirmation* of their Report ^d. They did not barely relate the Actions of Christ's Life, or attest that such and such wonderful Things were done by him, but proved the Truth of their Relation by doing the like Wonders themselves. God himself *seconded* their Testimony, and affirmed them to be *faithful* Witnesses. He exerted his Power in Vindication of their Veracity, and plainly appeared as a Voucher of it, in the *miraculous* spreading of the Gospel by their Ministry.

These are the Reasons which *ascertain* the Truth of their Reports, and put their Fidelity beyond all possible Question. Their Attestation has all the Credibility which any History *can have*; and more by a great deal than any *other History* in the World can pretend to; and if we refuse to believe it, we must for the same Reason disbelieve every Thing, which we do not actually see with our own Eyes.

Supposing we had lived in the Days of our Saviour, and had heard his *Prophecies*, and seen his *Miracles* our selves; this *sensible* Evidence of them, any Unbeliever will al-

^d Grot. de Verit. lib. 3. c. 7.

Jenkins's Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion, Vol. I. p. 293.

Rogers's Sermons, p. 147.

low, would have sufficed to engage our Belief of their *Reality*. But where is the Difference in point of *Sufficiency to convince us*, between this *sensible Evidence*, and that which we have from the Testimony of the Apostles? The Evidence which their Testimony gives us, is as *certain* to the full, as *impossible to deceive*, as the other. For since they are Witnesses, of whose *Knowledge and Veracity* we are fully assured, we are as *certain* that the Things they reported were really done, as if we had actually seen them: It is impossible in *Nature*, that *such Witnesses* should deceive us; impossible therefore that the Facts they attested should not be true; and if this be impossible, we are *infallibly* certain of their *Reality*. And can we have more Evidence than *infallible Certainty*? It is ridiculous to suppose it; and therefore we have as much Reason to believe them, upon the Report of these Witnesses, as if we had been Eye-Witnesses of them. And if we have such Reason to believe, that our Saviour had *the Spirit of Prophecy*, and *the Power of Miracles*, which the Apostles have attributed to him, we have the same Reason to believe, that God communicated to him his *own Knowledge and Power*, and *attested* him by so doing to act by *his Authority*.

And yet if nothing less than *sensible* Demonstration will satisfy; if we will not believe the *Attestation of God* to *Jesus* unless we could see it; we have before our Eyes a *plain Effect* of this *Attestation*, which is the *Reception of Christianity in the World*. We know that it is now professed in many Nations of the Earth; and we know it has been professed in them for many Ages upwards. But this could never have come to pass without God's *signal Interposition*. We can't account for the Reception and Prevalence of the Gospel by *natural Means*; or assign any other Cause of this Effect, but the *peculiar Operation* of God. For it was preached at the Beginning to People who had been bred up in *contrary Religions*, and it was encountred by the fiercest Opposition of the *Civil Power*; and therefore it could make no Progress, but by *subduing the Prejudices of Education*, and *defeating all possible Efforts to suppress it*; and yet it had no *natural Power*, either to subdue the one, or to defeat the other. There was neither *Allurement* in its *Nature*, nor *Artifice* in its *Recommendation*, to entice Men to embrace it; neither was it armed with any *Force* to withstand the enraged Malice wherewith it was attacked. The *Rulers of this World* employed all the Engines in their Power to extirpate it, and took the same sanguinary Method

thod for its Destruction, which *Herod* used for the Murder of its Author. And yet it prevailed in spite of all; it encreased by Discouragement; it flourished by Oppression; and the more it was *persecuted* the more it *prospered*. But this could not possibly happen without *God's Interposul*. Nothing but his *Omnipotence* exerted in its Behalf could have preserved it from perishing: Without this, it must, like the Counsel of *Theudas* ^e, and of other Impostors, have presently come to nought, and been memorable only for the Fate which attended it; for it was in the Nature of Things as impossible, that it should resist all the *Learning*, and *Policy*, and *Power* of the World combined against it, as it was that a few unarmed Men should drive *Hannibal* from the Gates of *Rome*, or *Xerxes* out of *Greece* ^f; and therefore we must own its Propagation to be *miraculous*. As it was so *wonderful* and *astonishing*, we must confess it to be the *Lord's doing*; and if God supported it by his *special Providence*, then its present Establishment in the World is a plain Effect of his *providential* Support, and a *sensible* Proof therefore of his commissioning our Saviour to publish it; and if so, we have all the Evidence of this Point which

^e Acts v. 36.

^f See Bishop Kidder's *Demonstration of the Messias*, p. 120.

Unbelievers *can require*. We have that very Proof, which, with the *Affectation* of *Wisdom*, they presume to insist upon: And as no *Means are wanting* to engage our Belief, Infidelity is a *wilful and inexcusable Sin*. It is founded in the Neglect or Contempt of Evidence, which *abundantly suffices* to convince us; and this is as certainly a *moral Iniquity*, as any other Crime whatsoever.

Nor is the *Folly* of *Unbelief* less than its *Guilt*; because it rejects a *Religion* the most *friendly and beneficial* to Mankind that can be imagined: A *Religion* which is admirably fitted to *answer all our Desires*; to *relieve all our Wants*; to *assuage all our Troubles*; to *beighthen all our Joys*; and, after promoting our Happiness in this World, to *secure the everlasting Felicities of the next*. So that it is a *Religion*, which every Man who has any true Regard for his own Interest; for his own well Being and Comfort, would wish to be true.

And is it not *monstrous*, for this Reason, that there should be so many People, expressing the utmost Aversion to it? exerting all their Talents, and striving with *painful Drudgery* to disprove it? They could not be more zealous against it, if it were the greatest Enemy they had; if it advanced any *Notions*, or taught any *Precepts*, destructive of
their

their Happiness; and yet nothing of this kind is pretended.

What then can be the Reason that they are so *exasperated* against it?

Is it, because it is an *Imposture*, and binds Men in the *Fetters* of *Superstition*? But if it be an *Imposture*, it is the most innocent, and agreeable, and beneficial one that ever was devised; the most diffusive of all manner of Comforts without any possible Disadvantage. And why then should they be enraged against it? But from this *glorious* Nature of it we conclude, that it neither is, nor can be an *Imposture*, and we defy them to refute that Conclusion.

Is it, because it restrains their *natural* Appetites, and ties them up from Indulgence with too much Severity? Why, to these very Restraints they owe all the Conveniencies of Life; all their *private* and *social* Happiness in this World; and if it had no Laws of this kind, there would be a *fundamental* Defect in it; and they might except against it with far more Reason than they do now.

Is it, because they want *natural Religion* to take place? But what is this *Idol* which they so much admire? *Natural Religion* is the Result of *natural Reason*, in forming a Rule of Action upon its own Bottom. And what kind of a Rule, think ye, would *natural*

ral Reason form merely by itself? What would every Man prescribe to himself, if he was left *absolutely to his own Reason* to direct him? He would form his Rule with a particular Reserve to his prevailing Inclinations, and hardly extend it to forbid his own Interest and Pleasures; so that every Man's *Religion* would be a *Scheme of Duty suited to his own Temper*, and allowing the Indulgence of it upon all Occasions. And what could be the Consequence of this, but that *every Man would do what is right in his own Eyes*: that all the turbulent Passions, and injurious Appetites of Men would be let loose upon the World without Restraint, and produce a State of the utmost Misery and Confusion? And therefore as this would be the Effect of *natural Religion*, they who labour to introduce it, are the worst Enemies of Mankind; and we should look upon them, as so many *treacherous Conspirators*, who would beguile us, by the plausible Sounds of *Freedom* and *Independency*, into the utmost Wretchedness.

The Belief of the Gospel is our *bounden Duty*, arising from the Evidences of its Authority which are *open to our View*: The Belief of it is our *greatest Interest*: No possible Mischief or Inconveniency can attend it; no Concern of Moment can it affect; but it will advance our Progress in solid
Wisdom

SERMON III. 105

Wisdom and true Virtue : It will give us Peace and Satisfaction of Mind : It will relieve us in the Time of Trouble : It will comfort us when confined to the Bed of Sickness, and brighten our Minds amidst the Agonies of Death with the Hopes of a *bles-
sed Immortality*.

Whereas if we reject our Saviour and his Doctrine, what can be the Fruit of so doing? No possible Benefit can arise from it ; but the Mischiefs of it are *certain* and *unavoid-
able*. It nourishes *Conceit*, and blows up the Mind to an *untractable Arrogance* and *Per-
verseness* : It with-holds from us the most engaging Motives to Piety and Virtue ; and sets us loose to gratify every *vile Affection*, and to sink into a State of *Brutality*. It keeps us in this infamous State, fluttering with vain Images of Sagacity, till Adversity or Sickness awakens our Minds ; and then, in that Hour of Distress, when all possible Comforts are wanting, then it aggravates the Pressure, and enflames the Misery : It fills the Soul with frightful, ill-boding Apprehensions ; and there are Instances of *In-
fidels*, who under the Approach of Death, have been stung with a piercing Sense of their Guilt ; have *called out for Mercy to that Jesus whom they persecuted before* ; and, at length, closed their Eyes with Horror and Despair, the Foretastes of the Punishment due to their Impiety.

Whoso

Whoſo therefore is *wiſe*, let him act with *Security*: Let him not, to humour his *Vanity*, and to live like a Brute, ſet at nought the *Chriſtian Faith*, the Conſequence of which muſt be *fatal*; but let him heartily believe, and highly eſteem, and ſincerely obey it, and he will inherit the nobleſt and moſt ſubſtantial Bleſſings; all the Comforts which he wants in this Vale of Miſery, and all the Happineſs he can enjoy, when he is removed out of it.



SERMON IV.

MARK xvi. ver. 15, 16.

*And he said unto them, Go ye into
all the World, and preach the Gos-
pel to every Creature.*

*He that believeth and is baptized,
shall be saved : but he that believeth
not, shall be damned.*

AS the Testimony of the Apostles, and
the wonderful Propagation of the Gos-
pel, are unquestionable Proofs of
God's sending our Saviour to publish it,
they evidently suffice to convince us of its
Divine Authority ; and we are bound for
that Reason to believe it to be the Doctrine
of God, and to consider it as his Will, or
the Rule of Action which he requireth us
to observe: And forasmuch as it is impossi-
ble

ble for God to affirm any Falshood, and we are obliged to pay him all manner of Reverence and Submission, therefore it is our Duty to believe the whole Subject Matter of the Gospel; because it is a necessary Expression of Respect to God, by whose Commission it was revealed.

It is indeed a self-evident Principle, that we ought to believe what God affirms; and as he has affirmed the whole Contents of the Gospel, or all the Narratives and Doctrines, the Promises and Threatnings of which it consists; therefore we are bound to believe them.

This Faith is *expresly commanded* in the New Testament, as well as *implicitly required* by its Divine Original.

Our Saviour, for Instance, opened his Ministry with this Precept, *Repent ye and believe the Gospel*^a: And he declares in the Text, *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he who believeth not, shall be damned.* Abraham is set forth as the Pattern of that Faith which is required under the Gospel^b; and his Faith consisted in an unreserved Belief, and in noble Acts of Obedience flowing from it. *Against Hope he believed in Hope, that he might become the Father of many Nations, according to that which*

^a Mark i.

^b Rom. iv. 23, 24.

was spoken, so shall thy Seed be. He staggered not at the Promise through Unbelief; but was strong in Faith giving Glory to God^c. He rejoiced to see the Day of Christ, and he saw it, and was glad^d. By Faith^e he sojourned in the Land of Promise^f, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise.

St. Paul in the 11th Chapter to the Hebrews, first gives a Description of Faith, and then declares it to be necessary to the Favour of God. Faith, says he, *is the Substance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not seen.* It is as firm an Assurance of the Things which God has promised, as if they were really come to pass, and of the Things which he has affirmed, as if we saw them our selves; *without which Faith, or entire Belief of God's Word, and reliance on his Truth, it is impossible to please him^g.*

St. Paul also teaches us, that *believing in the Name of the Lord Jesus is necessary to Salvation^h*; that, the preaching of the Gospel doth not profit, if it be not mixed with Faith in them who hear itⁱ; and that, in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any

^c Rom. iv. 18, 20.

^e Heb. xi. 17.

^g Heb. xi. 6.

ⁱ Heb. iv. 2.

^d Joh. viii. 56.

^f Gen. xvii. 8.

^h Acts xvi. 30, 31.

Thing,

110 SERMON IV.

Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love ^k.

I shall not multiply Texts in so clear a Case; but go on, 1st, To explain the Nature of this Duty, or shew wherein it consists: and 2dly, To recommend it to you, by shewing the Reasonableness and Advantages of it.

1st Then, I shall explain the Nature of this Duty, or shew wherein it consists.

Now to *believe* any thing, is to *judge it to be true*; and whether we ground that Judgment on our *own Perception* of its Truth, or on the *Testimony* of others, of whose *Knowledge* and *Veracity* we are assured, our *judging it to be true*, is *believing it*. Some have confined the Notion of *Faith*, to an *Assent upon Testimony*. They plead, that if Things appear true of *themselves*, or are *evident* either to our *Senses*, or our *Reason*, these are not Matters of *Faith*, but of *Science*; and we are not so properly said to *believe*, as to *know* them. But though there be a Difference between *Knowledge* and *Belief*; as *Knowledge* is founded in our *own Perception*, and *Belief* in the *Perception and Fidelity of others*; yet they are both the *same* in this Respect, that *Knowledge* is an Assent of the Mind to any Thing, or a Conviction of its Truth, as well as *Belief*; and

^k Gal. v. 6.

SERMON IV. III

if the *Act of the Mind* be the *same* in them both, then we may truly be said to *believe* what we *know*; and consequently *want of Knowledge* is not a necessary Ingredient of *Faith*¹. In the common Sense and Usage of Mankind, the Word *Belief* is applied to Things which are evident to our selves. We are commonly said to *believe* all those *moral* and *mathematical* Truths, which we *perceive* by the Deductions of our own *Reason*; and we use the same Term, with respect to Things, of which we have *sensible Evidence*. This Usage of the Word is warranted by our Saviour's Authority, who told *Thomas*, that he *believed* him to be risen, because he had *seen* him; and the first Christians are said to have *believed* the Miracles, of which they had *ocular Demonstration*. So that *Faith*, or *Belief*, is the judging any Thing to be true, which appears to be so, either from the *Conclusions* of our *Reason*, or the *Evidence* of our *Senses*, or the *Attestation* of *others*, or from all these Means of Perception together.

Now, as this is the true Notion of *Belief*, so the Faith which God challenges to the whole System of the Gospel, is an Acknowledgment of its Truth upon his Authority; an hearty Assent to all the *Points of Fact*,

¹ See *Fiddes's Body of Divinity, Vol. I. p. 337.*

112 SERMON IV.

and all the *Points of Doctrine* contained in it, because God has attested them.

I am persuaded, for Example, that as the Gospel was published by his special Authority, he has borne witness to the Truth of all the Doctrines and Miracles reported in it. Under this Persuasion, I proceed to examine what are the Doctrines and Miracles so attested by him. Upon Examination I find the following Particulars: That, he is a Being of infinite Justice, and Goodness, and all Perfections: That, the *Jewish* Revelation is true, and was promulged by his Authority: That, its Prophecies relate chiefly to the Messiah, and to a new Revelation which he should publish: That, these Prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus of *Nazareth*, and manifested him to be the Saviour of the World, promised all along from the Beginning of it: That, he wrought the Salvation of Men by dying for their Sins, and purchasing through the Merits of his Sufferings, a Condition of Pardon and Acceptance: That, he rose from the Dead after his Crucifixion, and ascended visibly into Heaven: That, he was not meerly an Agent, or Embassador of God, but God himself united to Man, whilst acting by voluntary Condescension, as a Minister of Heaven: That, the Divine Nature subsists in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost:

SERMON IV. 113

Ghost: That, these corruptible Bodies of ours shall after their Dissolution be restored to Life, and united to the same Souls which now inhabit them: That, upon our Revival, we shall be summoned before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and receive a final irreversibile Sentence, either to everlasting Happiness, or eternal Misery.

These are some of the more material Articles which I find affirmed in the Gospel; and as they are attested by God, who can neither be himself deceived, nor impose upon us, I firmly assent to them all; to the *miraculous Facts*, and *mysterious Doctrines*, as well as to those of a different kind. I equally judge them to be true, in Deference to God's *Knowledge* and *Veracity*; and in the giving of *this Assent*, in the passing of *this Judgment*, consists the Duty of *believing*, which God requires of us all.

This, I apprehend, is a *true Account*, as it is a very *plain* and *intelligible* one of the Nature of *Faith*; and since nothing farther is requisite to explain its Notion, I shall now proceed 2dly, to shew the *Reasonableness* of this Duty; and recommend it to you, as an Act highly *rational*, and fit to be performed.

It is the Unhappiness of the Age to abound with Men of a *sceptical Disposition*; Men who are wonderfully nice and
I delicate

delicate in believing; who can't suffer those Things to pass into their Assent, which so easily go down with others. With respect to *Doctrines*, they must *distinctly* and *thoroughly* perceive them. They deal in nothing but *clear* and *adequate* Ideas. They reject as incredible whatever is not level to their Comprehension, and they *strain at a Gnat* on the side of Religion, while they easily *swallow Camels* in Opposition to it.

With respect to *Facts* which they can't account for, they will not take them upon *Trust*. Several Things, say they, have been reported and believed to be true, though really false. Nothing is more natural and common, than for Men to deceive, and to be deceived; but that a Man should cure all Diseases with the speaking of a Word; that he should restore People to Life; that, he should himself rise from the Dead, and ascend visibly into Heaven; this is altogether *supernatural*, and *surpassing Belief*. They can't assent to such Things upon any Attestation, and unless they could see them, they will not believe. Upon this Foundation, they reject the *mysterious Doctrines*, and *miraculous Facts* of the Gospel. They *magisterially* pronounce, as from a Chair of Authority, that it is *irrational* to believe them: It is *servile* and *stupid* Credulity, and unworthy

thy of any Man who has tolerable Parts and Penetration.

However, let us not be moved by *swelling Words of Vanity*; but fairly argue the Case, and see how it will stand upon an impartial Disquisition.

The Question is, whether it be *reasonable* to believe the *miraculous Facts* and *mysterious Doctrines* affirmed in the Gospel; whether in point of *Reason* and *good Sense*, we should receive them as true, or reject them as incredible.

This is the Question.

Now, it must of Necessity be granted, that whatever has *plain* and *certain* Evidence of its Truth ought in Reason to be believed: For as it is confirmed by such Evidence, there is plainly more *Reason* for believing it, than there can be for the contrary; and since every Thing which God affirms must be true, because it is impossible for him either to be himself deceived, or to impose upon his Creatures; therefore the Belief of these Facts and Doctrines is highly *rational*, because we are certain from God's attesting them that they must be true.

But more particularly; 1st, As to the *Facts*. It can't be pretended that the Notion of *Miracles* is a *Delusion*, or that no such Facts can happen as we call *miraculous*. For certainly, God who preserves the

World which he created, and produces by his constant Agency that regular Order of Events which is termed the *Course of Nature*, may act when he pleases in a different Manner, and alter the usual Course of Things upon particular Occasions. He may either suspend, or heighten his wonted Operation on second Causes, and produce, by so doing, *miraculous* Effects.

And as it is in his Power to work *Miracles*, so we are certain, that those reported in the Gospel are really true. We know them to be related by Persons, whose *Knowledge* and *Veracity* are unexceptionable; who gave such Proofs of their *Fidelity*, as no other Witnesses ever gave. We know moreover that God enabled them to work *Miracles* in Confirmation of their Report^m, and signally interposed to spread the Gospel by their *Ministry*; and hence it is evident, that he affirmed their Honesty to the whole World, and declared them to act by his Commission; that, he himself *seconded* their Testimony, and *attested* the Facts which they reported. And if God attested them, then we are sure they must be true; and we ought upon this Certainty of their Truth to believe them. *Reason* requires us so to

^m Grotius de Verit. &c. lib. 3. c. 7.

Jenkins's Reasonableness, &c. Vol. I. p. 293.

Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 428.

do; and therefore the Disbelief of them is not *Reason*, but *Perverseness*; and the dignifying of *Infidelity* with the Name of *Wisdom*, is much like the Practice of the Heathens, who used to make Gods of some of their Vices.

2dly, As to the *mysterious* Doctrines of the Gospel, which are certain Propositions relating to the Nature and Counsels of God, *unperceivable by our natural Capacities*, I shall assert the *Reasonableness* of believing them, from the following Considerations.

First, Because it is *reasonable* to expect Propositions of this kind in a *Divine Revelation*.

Secondly, Because we have as *certain* Evidence of the Truth of these Propositions, as we have of those which we perceive to be true.

Thirdly, Because they are as fully conceivable, as the Attributes of God, and the Things of Nature, which we all believe without Scruple or Reluctance.

And Fourthly, Because great Advantages arise from the Belief of them.

First then, Let us consider that it is reasonable to expect, that God should deliver *mysterious* Doctrines in the *Revelation of his Will*.

The great End, most certainly, for which God *revealed* his Will, was to manifest to us our Duty, and engage us to pursue our Happiness by performing it. One of the first Duties which we owe to God, is an *Acknowledgment of his Divine Perfections*ⁿ; because it is the necessary *Foundation* of all others; since such as our Conceptions are of his Nature, such in Consequence will be our Deportment towards him; and one of his Divine Perfections is *infallible Truth*; the Acknowledgment of which therefore is a *necessary Duty*.

Now, if God in the *Revelation* of his Will, had delivered no other Propositions than such as we could *fully understand*, we should have no Opportunity of acknowledging his *Veracity*, and expressing a proper Regard to it: For when we assent to a Proposition which we *perceive to be true from the Nature of the thing*, we assent upon the Ground of our own *Perception*, and not in Deference to any Person who affirms it to us. We should assent to such a Proposition, though it were asserted by a Person, for whose Testimony we had no manner of Regard; and therefore our assenting to such a Proposition, would not imply an Acknowledgment of God's *Truth*, or a Submission

ⁿ See Rogers's Sermons, p. 88.

to his *Authority*. Our reliance on his Word, or believing for his Sake, can be expressed only, by assenting to Propositions, which we do not *our selves perceive to be true*. Here we assent upon the *Authority* of his Affirmation, and we confess in so doing his infallible *Veracity*.

Suppose, for Instance, that God had affirmed no other Doctrines than such as we could discover: to wit; that, he is a Being of all possible Perfection; that, he preserves us by his Care, as he created us by his Power; that, the Soul will subsist when separated from the Body; that, we are accountable to him for our Actions, and shall be rewarded or punished in a future State, according to their Quality. Supposing this had been the Case, it is evident, that, as we can *perceive* the Truth, and prove the Certainty of these Doctrines by our *own Reason*, they would leave no room for *acknowledging the Truth of the Revealer*, inasmuch as we should believe them, were they affirmed by the most *notorious Impostor*. But when besides the Doctrines of this kind, there are others delivered which we cannot prove or discern to be true, these give us the Opportunity of believing on the sole Credit and Authority of God, and of confessing by such Belief, his infinite *Knowledge*, and unfailing *Veracity*.

If therefore it be *reasonable* to expect in a Divine *Revelation*, that God should require an Acknowledgment of his *Truth*; and if such Acknowledgment can't be made, but by assenting, upon his Authority, to Propositions which lie beyond the Reach of our own *Perception*, it is certainly *reasonable* to expect such Propositions in a Divine *Revelation*. And if it be *reasonable* to expect them, it must be *reasonable* to believe them: They are credible for this very *Reason*, because they are *mysterious*; and therefore to reject and explode them on this Account, is *pure Absurdity*.

Secondly, Let us consider that we have as *certain* Evidence of the Truth of these Propositions, as we have of those, which our *Reason* discovers to us.

We have the like *Perception*, and the like *Assurance* of God's affirming them, as we have of the Truth of Doctrines which we *apprehend of our selves*. We collect, for Instance, as certainly from reading the Gospel, that it asserts the *Incarnation of God*, as we do from our own Reasonings, that God is *eternal*, or *almighty*. We have as much Assurance of the Fact, that the Gospel teaches the *Incarnation* of God, as we can have of the Divine *Eternity*, or *Omni-potence*: And if we know that the Gospel teaches

teaches it, we know by necessary Consequence, that it *must be true*; as being affirmed by God himself; who cannot assert any Thing that is false: And if we are fully certified of its Truth, we are bound in point of *Reason* to believe it; since *right Reason* unchangeably, everlastingly requires us to believe that Doctrine, which has *plain and certain Evidence of its Truth*. We don't indeed perceive it by the pure Light of our Minds: But what then? We perceive it as *infallibly* by the Light of the Gospel super-added to it. And what does it signify how we perceive it? The single Point is, whether we have clear and good Evidences of its Truth; and if we have, it Matters not by what *Medium* we receive them; for however they are conveyed to us, whether by *Reason*, or by *Scripture*, our Obligation to believe is still the same, being founded in their *Sufficiency to persuade our Assent*.

The Gospel most plainly asserts that *God was incarnate*: What the Gospel asserts, which we know to have been revealed from God, must be *infallibly true*; therefore it is most certain that *God was incarnate*. Can any thing be plainer than this Conclusion? It is founded in a most clear, and close Connexion of Ideas; and it is as impossible for us to be deceived in it, as in any Deduction of *Reason* whatever. And will any Man tell

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us that we should not believe the *Incarnation of God*, because it is not evident to our Reason? He may as rationally urge, that we should not believe what we see through an *Optick*, because we cannot discern it by the *naked Eye*; and therefore the Disbelief of such Doctrines is manifestly *unreasonable*. It is refusing to be persuaded by sufficient Proof. It is with-holding the Assent, where there is just Ground to give it. It is despising the Evidence which is before us, notwithstanding its *Sufficiency*; and insisting on *intrinsic* Evidence, as a Condition without which we *will not believe*.

And yet, if we will believe nothing, but what we can prove by *this kind* of Evidence, I doubt, we must not believe that there is a *God*. For how do we perceive the *Existence* of a Deity? Is it, by arguing *merely* from the *Nature* and *Properties* of the Subject? No! We can this Way attain *no Proof* of his Existence: But we argue from *sensible Effects*; from the Magnificence, and Order, and Beauty of this visible World. These lead us to the Discovery of a most wise and powerful Agent by whom it was produced, and from these we *infer* his *Existence*. And is it any Argument against the *Belief* of a Deity, that we cannot apprehend him by *intrinsic Evidence*? No certainly: And the Reason is, because we as clearly see his *eternal*

nal Godhead in the Creation, as fully discover it through the *Medium* of his Works, as if we could prove it without this Assistance. In like manner, it is no Argument against the *Belief of Mysteries*, that we cannot perceive them by our Reason alone. We read them as plainly in the *Book of God*, as we do his Being in the *Volume of Nature*; and we are as fully certified of the one by the *Scripture* which he hath dictated, as we are of the other by the *Things which he hath made*; and therefore we are equally obliged to believe them: Or, if we reject these Doctrines because not discoverable by our selves, we must for the same Reason *disbelieve the Existence of a God*.

Thirdly, Let us consider that the *mysterious Doctrines* of the Gospel, are as fully *conceivable* as the *Attributes of God*, and the *Things of Nature*, which we all believe without Scruple or Reluctance.

The *Attributes of God*, such as, *Self-Existence*, *Eternity*, *Omnipresence*, and the like, are no less *mysterious*, and above our Comprehension, than the Doctrine of the *Trinity*: We are as unable to perceive the *Manner* of these Attributes, or to apprehend *how* he exists without *Cause*, or *Beginning*, as we are to perceive the *Unity* in *Three Persons*.

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As for Instance. The *Self-Existence* of God is a great Mystery to us. The *Knowledge of it is too wonderful for us; we cannot attain unto it.* The Meaning of it is, that God exists *of himself*, by the Necessity of Nature, without *external* or *internal Cause* of Existence. We are certain that this is a *Property* of the Divine Nature; because, as it is the *first Cause* of all Things, it is impossible that any Thing should be *prior* to it, or that there can be *any Cause* from which it proceeds. And yet it is inconceivable, how any Being should exist, without *any possible Cause* for it.

In like manner, the *Eternity* of God is very *mysterious*. There are Difficulties in it which we cannot clear up. When we attempt to conceive, or explain an Eternal *past Duration*, we are immediately lost and bewildered; and the more we think upon the Subject, the more amazing it grows.

The Notion of God's *Eternity*, which supposes it to consist in one *indivisible Point*, or *everlasting Instant*, coexistent with all the Periods of Time, has plain Inconsistencies in it, for which it is now generally rejected; and yet the other Notion of his *Eternity*, which supposes it to be a *successive Duration*, carries in it *insuperable* Difficulties. For a Succession of Time implies of Necessity a *first Moment*, or Part of Time *prior* to the rest.

rest. We cannot conceive the one separately from the other; and a *first Moment* implies a *Beginning*, which is inconsistent with *Eternity*.

So again, the *Omnipresence* of God is another *Mystery*. We cannot attempt to explain it without running into Mazes which we can't get through, and into Repugnancies which we can't reconcile. If we suppose the ° *Divine Essence* to be *every where* like the *smallest Point*, we know not what we mean, and the Notion is full of Contradictions. If we suppose the *Divine Essence* to be *infinitely extended*,

° See Dr. Waterland's first *Defence*, where this Subject is thoroughly [and excellently] discussed. He proves that the *Omnipresence*, the *Simplicity*, the *Self-Existence*, the *Eternity* of God, are alike *mysterious*, as the *Trinity* and the *Incar-nation*, or, that they fall under the like *Cases*; to wit, of Propositions, in which the *Ideas* are either *seemingly* repugnant, or such as reach not to *Particulars*, or such as *Ima-gination* has no Concern with. *Defence*, p. 309, to 318.

After this, he says as follows. " God's *Eternity* and "
" *Omnipresence* we have only *general* and *confused* Ideas of;
" Scripture has not revealed to us the particular *Modus*, or
" *minute* Circumstances of either; and we are not obliged
" to *believe* any otherwise than as we *apprehend* (i. e. con-
" fusedly and inadequately) nor indeed is it possible. The
" same is the Case of three Persons, *every one truly God*,
" and all but *one God*; so far evident from Scripture, and
" *apprehended* in the general, as fully and clearly (perhaps
" more so) as *Eternity*, *Omnipresence*, or the like. But the
" particular *Modus*, how the *Three* are *One*, and the *minute*
" Circumstances of their *Union* and *Distinction*, are as much
" a Secret to us, as how God foresees future Contingents,
" or is present in all Places at once. Many have been pry-
" ing and inquisitive into this Matter, hoping to know some-
" thing

extended, we are as far from *adequate* Ideas as before, and the *Hypothesis* is clogged with Difficulties which we cannot surmount. *Extension* is a *Property of Matter*; and how can it belong to an *immaterial* Being? The Idea of it includes *Divisibility*, to which the Deity can't possibly be subject; and likewise a *Composition of Parts*, which is contrary to the *Divine Simplicity*.

So that there is nothing in the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, or in the other *Mysteries* of the Gospel, more perplexing and inconceivable, than there is in the *Self-Existence*, the *Eternity*, and *Omnipresence* of God; and therefore it is as *reasonable* to believe the one, as the other. If *Reason* directs us to believe these *Attributes*, notwithstanding their *Mysteriousness*, it must direct us in course to believe the *Mysteries* of the Gospel. These Things must stand or fall together, since their Case is exactly parallel; for there is the same Ground for *Assent*, and the same Argument for *Disbelief* in them both; and

“ thing more particular of it, till they have come to doubt
 “ even of the Thing itself, and so have fallen into *Heresy*;
 “ and *Catholicks* have sometimes exceeded, in this Way,
 “ endeavouring to explain beyond their *Ideas*; which is really nothing else but multiplying Words. The *Notion* is soon stated, and lies in a little Compass. All that Words are good for, after, is only to fix and preserve that *Notion*, which is not improvable (without a new Revelation) by any *new Idea*; but may be obscured and stifled in a Multitude of Words. *Defence*, p. 320.

therefore they must both be admitted, or rejected alike. To believe the one, and not the other is manifest *Partiality*, and repugnant to all Equity and Reason.

With respect to the Things of *Nature* which we believe, they are no less *abstruse* and *incomprehensible*, than the *Mysteries* of the Gospel.

As for Instance, the *Union* of the Soul with the Body, and their *mutual Action* upon each other, is *inconceivable*. Most of the Operations which we our selves perform, in Consequence of this Union, are equally *mysterious*. Who can tell *how* he sees external Objects, and apprehends their several Figures and Dimensions? Who can fully explain *how* the Blood moves round in the Body; *how* the same Thing can be both *Cause* and *Effect*, as it is in that circular Motion? Who can give a certain Account, *how* the Earth hangeth in the Air without any Thing to support it? *How* various kinds of Metals and Stones grow in it? *How* the Seed sown, after dying in the Ground, revives again? *How* the Flowers are so richly and elegantly arrayed? *How* Plants and Trees grow up, and yield their Strength? or, *how* the Birds and Beasts move spontaneously from Place to Place? These are all *Mysteries* to us; and there is hardly *any Thing in Nature*, which we fully understand. The most contemptible

ble Insect, or common Pebble in the Streets, would puzzle the finest Understanding accurately to explain. And yet *Reason* directs us to believe these Things, though we cannot *comprehend* them. Why then should not the *Mysteries* of the Gospel be believed? Or what *Reason* can there be for rejecting them? We perceive them as plainly in the Scripture, as we do the Things of Nature which we behold. They are as clearly presented to our *Understanding*, as the others are to our *Senses*; and therefore there is the *same Ground* for believing them. If it would be *strangely irrational* to disbelieve these sensible Objects because they are *mysterious*, it must be equally so to disbelieve the Doctrines of Religion on that Account; and if he who should, in Sullenness, deny his own Being and Operations because he can't *comprehend* them, would be taken to be mad, we may conclude, that it is not the *Sagacity*, but the *Disorder* of the Head which induces our *great Masters of Reason* to reject the *Mysteries* of the Gospel. The Truth is; our Understandings are of a limited Extent; and there must be innumerable Things, which lie beyond the reach of their Perception. Those *especially* which relate to the great God, can no more be *comprehended*, than we can see at *one View*, the Objects dispersed through the *whole Creation*. It is impossible
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in *Nature*, that an *infinite* Subject should be *comprehended* by a *finite* Capacity; and it is a plain *Contradiction* to suppose it: And if the *Works* of God are full of *Mysteries*, how can the *Essence* of God be revealed without a *Mystery*? Or how could the *Doctrines* relating to an *incomprehensible* Being represent it *truly*, if they were level to our *Comprehension*? So that their *Mysteriousness* is an *Argument* of their *Truth*; and therefore to disbelieve them on that Account, is to refuse our Assent for the very Reason which should persuade it.

Let this height of Absurdity, the Result of *intemperate Conceit*, engage us to think *humbly* of our selves; to consider the Weakness and Scantiness of our Capacities; the Narrowness of the Compass to which our Knowledge reaches, and the Imperfection of it, even within those poor Bounds. *For the corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, and the earthy Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that museth upon many Things. And hardly do we guess aright at the Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the Things that are before us: but the Things that are in Heaven, who hath searched out?* This will induce us to cast down every high Imagina-

^p See *Young's Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 74, 85.

^q *Book of Wisdom*, c. ix. 15, 16.

tion, and to bring down every Thought to the Obedience of Faith. It will give us a just Sense, that many Things may be true, tho' we cannot perceive them; and that the want of a full Perception, is no Reason for Disbelief. It will teach us, that we have nothing to do with the particular *Modus* of Doctrines, but are only to enquire, whether they are revealed; and hence we shall see the *Reasonableness* of believing them, which is one *Inducement* to it; and for its farther Recommendation to you, I shall now shew thirdly, the Wisdom and Discretion of it.

If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self, says Solomon, the great Master of Wisdom. It is an unquestionable Instance of Prudence to consult our own Safety and Advantage; to choose that Method of acting which is most secure and beneficial, and to run as little Hazard as may be of future Inconveniences and Mischiefs.

Now the Belief of the Gospel *Mysteries* is attended with no Danger at all; no possible Disadvantage can arise from it. Neither our *Reputation*, nor *Interest*, nor *Pleasure* can it affect; but it highly conduces to make us wiser and better: The great Worth and Acceptableness of it are proclaimed in Scripture, and God has annexed to it the Blessings of Heaven. Whereas the *Disbelief* of these Doctrines is extremely *injurious*.

It

SERMON IV. 131

It nourishes the Pride, the Extravagance of Conceit out of which it grows, and flatters the Mind into an obstinate Wilfulness. It with-holds many powerful Motives to Piety and Virtue. It fills Men with Prejudices against the Gospel, and leads them to the absolute Denial of it. It is a great Indignity to God, as it disregards his Testimony, and will not allow him to reveal any thing, but what they can perceive. It is a direct Violation of his Will, as well as Affront to his Perfections; and we find that he hath expressed the utmost Abhorrence of it, and denounced the severest Penalty against it.

Such being the Difference between *Belief* and *Unbelief*, in their respective Influences and Effects, *Whoso is prudent, let him act with Security.* Let him not disorder his Mind, and provoke God Almighty to his own eternal Detriment, by continuing *faithless*; but improve his Principles, and enlarge his Views, and pay a due Regard to his great Lawgiver and Sovereign, by a *firm Belief* of all his Declarations. This is the *wise* and *prudential* Part. As for Instance.

He who believes the *Union of the Divine Nature with the human* in the Person of our Saviour, not only performs an indispensable Duty, because God positively commands his Assent to it, but receives from his Belief exceeding Comfort and Advantage. For the

Persuasion that God himself became Man to die in our stead, and to purchase for us a Condition of eternal Life, gives us a most lively Sense of his *infinite Loving-kindness* to us, and of the *Certainty* of our *Acceptance* upon the Condition which he hath purchased; and therefore it is a most engaging Motive to adore and obey him, and a most reviving Consolation in our sinful State. So that he who believes this Doctrine, has such a View of God's unbounded Mercy, as excites him to all possible returns of Gratitude and Affection; and such an Assurance of Forgiveness, as encourages him to pay them with Chearfulness and Resolution. The Sense of his Guilt gives him no terrifying Apprehensions. He is subject to no Intervals of Diffidence and Despair. The Promise of God is his unfailing Security. It cheers and Supports his Mind in the Hour of Distress, and sends him out of the World *with Hopes full of Immortality*.

The like Advantages arise from the Belief of the other *Mysteries* of the Gospel; and therefore the Submission of our Faith to them, is its own abundant Reward, and would be our *Wisdom and Understanding*, if no other Recompence attended it; and yet it entitles us to a Reward from God, who has promised Life and Salvation to all *true* Believers.

Why

Why then should we, for the humouring of our Vanity, and offering Incense to our Pride, disbelieve these Doctrines, and forfeit the inestimable *Blessings* and *Rewards* of *Faith*? Why should we perplex our Heads, and unhinge our Brains in dark Speculations about them, and pursue, through the Mazes of Confusion, the Punishments of *Infidelity*? With what Face or Conscience can we disbelieve what God affirms, and make him a *Liar* by so doing? How can we offer this outrageous Indignity to the *adorable*, the *tremendous* Father of us all? And therefore while our *modern Unbelievers* incur his Displeasure by their *Infidelity*; while they do this with an Air of *Caution* and *Sagacity*; let us resolve, in the true *Spirit of Wisdom*, to approve our selves to him by our *Faith*, and beseech him to crown it with *Stability*, that it may be as *glorious* in its *Event*, as it is *excellent* for its *Discretion*.

SERMON V.

ROMANS ix. ver. 5.

*Of whom as concerning the Flesh
Christ came, who is over all, God
blessed for ever. Amen.*

HAVING shewn the *Reasonableness* and *Necessity* of believing the Gospel to be a *Divine Revelation*, and of believing, in Consequence, its *whole Subject Matter*; particularly, the *mysterious Doctrines* asserted in it, I proceed now to prove, that the *Divinity* of Jesus Christ, or the Union of the *Divine* and *human* Nature in his Person, is one of these Doctrines.

The Words of *St. Paul* which I have read to you, assert a *twofold* Nature in Christ, the *Divine* and *Human*. For they declare that he descended from the *Jews* with respect to his *Humanity*, and that he was at
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the same time, over all, God blessed for ever.

These Words have been pretty much tampered with by our modern *Arians*, and all possible Arts have been used to stifle their Evidence.

It has been pretended ^a, that the Reading and Construction of the Passage are dubious; that, it may be understood of *God the Father*; and that, if it be understood of *Christ*, then the Word *God* is wanting in many Manuscripts, and *Christ* is not affirmed to be *God over all*, but only, to be over all.

But it has been proved in Confutation of these Pretences, that the Passage can't possibly be meant of *God the Father* ^b; and that the Word *God* is so far from being wanting in many Manuscripts, that on the contrary, it is in *them all*; in *all* the Copies of the Original, and in *all* the Translations too, the *Syriac* not excepted, though *Grotius* affirmed the *Syriac* to want it ^c.

It has been pretended farther, that supposing the Text to affirm our Saviour to be *God over all*, yet the Import of it is no

^a *Clark's Scripture Doctrine*, 2d Edition, p. 75.

^b See the Books referred to by Dr. *Waterland* in his *Second Defence*, p. 36. To which may be added, the *Defence* of the late Bishop of *London's* Letter to his Clergy, p. 71.

^c See *Mills* upon the Place; and *Pearson* on the Creed, p. 133.

more than this, that *all Things are put under him.*

The asserting him to be God over all, is only repeating^d what is said in another Place, that, *all Things are put under him*; and the Meaning of it is distinctly explained by St. Paul himself in the following Texts. But when he saith *all Things are put under him*, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all Things under him. The Son himself shall be subject unto him that put all Things under him, that God may be all in all. And again; The Head of Christ is God, who gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church^e.

But with what Colour of Reason can it be thought, that these Passages of St. Paul are parallel, or that the same thing is repeated in them? For in the Text, he asserts the Dignity of Christ in *Contradistinction* to his *human Nature*, and to any Dignity therefore accruing to him, from the Powers he received in it. He speaks of him in a double Respect; as descending from the *Jews according to the Flesh*, and as being at the same

^d As the same Apostle tells us, that when he saith *all Things are put under Christ*, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all Things under him; so here, in like manner, when he repeats the very same Thing, that *Christ is God over all*, it is manifest, &c. *Clark's Scripture Doctrine*, 2d Ed. p. 75.

^e Reply to Dr. Waterland's first Defence, p. 13.

Time, *God over all, blessed for ever.* So that he declares him to have been *THEN God blessed for ever*, when he derived his *human Extraction* from the *Jews*^f; and therefore the asserting him to be *God over all*, is not merely repeating what is said in another Place, that *all Things were put under him* as Mediator, but it is saying a quite different Thing: It is asserting him to be *God over all, abstractedly* from the Powers he received, and before he was advanced over all Things, as Mediator. It is declaring what he was *antecedently* to his human Nature, and to all the Transactions in it^g.

Besides, if *St. Paul* meant no more by calling him *God over all, blessed for ever*, than that all Things were put under him by the Father,

^a Ἐξ ᾧ ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὃ ὦν ἐν παντί Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

Of whom Christ came according to the *Flesh*, *being over all, God blessed for ever.* That is, *Christ, being over all, God, &c.* descended from the *Jews* as to his Humanity. He was *God over all*, when he descended, or before he came from the *Jews according to the Flesh*. He was in respect of *the Flesh*, or his *human Nature*, descended from the *Jews*, but he was too in respect of *another Nature, God blessed for ever.* The like is said by the same Apostle in another Place. He declares of Christ, that *he was made of the Seed of David, κατὰ σάρκα*, but *manifested the Son of God κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης.* Rom. i. 3.

^g The Author of the *Reply* to Dr. *Waterland's* first *Defence*, quotes *Hippolytus* as interpreting the Text in this Sense, that *Christ is God over all*, because *all Things were given him from the Father.* But the Gentleman quotes *Hippolytus*

Father, it is plain, that he must give him these *distinguishing* Titles of the true God, purely as being advanced over all Things; and consequently, must think such Advancement to be a sufficient Ground of declaring him the one God supreme; and if so, then it would be St. Paul's Doctrine, that Christ was *made* God blessed for ever, or *advanced into* God blessed for ever, by the Dominion imparted to him in the Capacity of Mediator. But St. Paul certainly had not in his Head the *contradictory* Notion of a *made* God; a God *constituted* such, by having all Things put under him, nor is it possible that such a Notion should be advanced by him; and therefore the Passages alledged as parallel to the Text, and explanatory of it, are far from being so; and it remains, that the Doctrine affirmed in it is this, that *Christ is truly, and by Nature God*.

And

Hippolytus by halves. He suppresses Part of what that Father says upon the Subject. In the very next Words to those which he cites, *Hippolytus* supposes Christ to be God over all Blessed, BEFORE all Things were given him; therefore he could not think him to be God over all, by virtue of having all Things given him. See the whole explained by Dr. *Waterland* in his *second Defence*, p. 37.

^a Deus factus inter Socinianorum & Arianorum Portenta numerandus est, a quibus sana Ratio non minus quam vera Religio abhorret. *Bul. Jud. Eccl. Cat.* 8^o. p. 99.

ⁱ The Author of the *Reply* to Dr. *Waterland's first Defence*, says, p. 13. That allowing the Words to be spoken of Christ, still it is, not *made* God, but *truly* God.

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And yet, notwithstanding the Evidence of this, and of innumerable other Places to the same Purpose, it has been a Question we know, and a Question *obstinately debated*, whether, or no, the Scriptures assert Jesus Christ to be *truly God*. The Affirmative of this Question has been *excellently maintained*, and indeed *fully confirmed* in this Place; and scarce any Thing more is to be done, besides reviewing the Arguments which have been used in Proof of it, and shewing how evidently they have succeeded in the Debate, and gained a complete Victory over the *Arian Cause*.

This is therefore the Business which I shall attempt; and in order to pursue it in a regular Method, I shall

First, Mention the principal Arguments which have been used to prove our Saviour's Divinity to be taught in Scripture; and shall shew that all the Efforts of the Adversary to invalidate their Force, have been vain and ineffectual.

πάντων Θεός; that is, Christ is not affirm'd to be *Θεός* with the Article *ὁ*, but without it. How vastly sage is this Observation? It has been proved over and over, that the inserting or omitting of the Article, is of no Significance. The Father is called God without the Article, and Christ is called God with it. And yet this worthy Person makes a solemn Remark, about the Omission of the Article. See Bishop *Pearson* on the Creed, *Art. 2. p. 130.*

Secondly,

Secondly, I shall mention the Arguments chiefly insisted on in Proof of Christ's *natural Inferiority* to the Father, and shall shew that they have been thoroughly baffled and confuted.

Thirdly, I shall prove that the *Arian* Scheme is clogged with insuperable Difficulties, and that the Revivers of it among us, have fallen into the most palpable Inconsistencies and Contradictions.

Fourthly, I shall set forth the Necessity of believing Christ to be *truly God*, not only because the Scripture affirms him to be so, but likewise upon other Considerations of great Importance.

First then, I shall mention the principal Arguments which have been used in Proof that our Saviour's *true* Divinity is taught in Scripture, or that he is declared to be *truly*, and by *Nature* God; and shall shew that all the Efforts of the Adversary to invalidate their Force, have been vain and ineffectual.

Now, the principal Arguments which have been used in Proof of this Point, are, as I apprehend, these that follow.

First, That the *distinguishing* Titles, and *incommunicable* Perfections of the *true God* are ascribed to him.

Secondly,

Secondly, That he is affirmed to be the *Creator* and *Preserver* of the Universe.

Thirdly, That we are directed to *worship* and *adore* him.

And fourthly, That he is *included* in the *one true God*, who is declared to be the *only God*, *besides whom there is no other*.

First then let us consider that the *distinguishing Titles*, and *incommunicable Perfections* of the *true God* are ascribed to our Saviour.

As to the *Titles* given to him; he is called *Jehovah*^k; which is the *incommunicable Name* of the one true God: It expresses *Being*; *perpetual unvariable Being*; or, *necessary, immutable Existence*, which is peculiar to God alone: And as it denotes his *appropriate Excellency* and *Perfection*^l, so it is the Name by which he distinguishes himself from all
the

^k Our Saviour appears to be called *Jehovah* by the following Texts.

Compare *Isai. vi.* with *John xii. 41.*

Zec. xii. 10. with *John xix. 37.*

Isa. xl. 3. with *Mark i. 3.*

Psal. cii. 25. with *Heb. i. 10.*

Zec. xi. 12. with *Mat. xxvii. 9, 10.*

Hof. i. 7. with *Luk. ii. 11.*

See the Texts produced at length, and excellently explained by *Dr. Waterland* in his *first Defence*, p. 58.

^l The late *Dr. Clark* owned, that the Name *Jehovah* refers to the *necessary Existence* of the Person so named; and that it was given to that visible Person (meaning Christ) who
appeared

the Gods of the Nations, and sets forth his infinite Superiority to them^m; therefore the attributing of this *Title* to Christ, proves him to be *necessarily*, and *immutably* existent; or *truly*, and *by Nature* God.

Our Saviour also is stiled *Lord Godⁿ*, *Jehovah Elohim*; *True God^o*, *Great God^p*, and *Mighty God^q*, as well as the Father. He is called moreover the^r *Lord of Hosts*; the *Lord of Glory^t*; *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords^u*; *Alpha and Omega*; the *Beginning*, and the *Ending*; the *First and the Last^v*; the *Lord which is, and which was, and which is to come*, the *Almighty^x*; than which nothing

appeared as representing the Person of the invifible God. *Clark's Reply*, p. 142, 163.

The Word *Jehovah* expreffes God, as *Being*, or existing *necessarily*, according to the beft Criticks antient and modern. See *True Scripture Doctrine Continued*, p. 133.

^m See Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 33.

ⁿ Luk. i. 16, 17. See this Paſſage explained and vindicated in the *True Scripture Doctrine*, p. 44. and *True Scripture Doctrine Continued*, p. 132.

^o 1 John v. 20. See *Scripture Doctrine*, p. 28. and *Continued*, p. 106. and Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 206.

^p Tit. ii. 13. *True Scripture Doctrine Continued*, p. 84. Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 214.

^q If. ix. 6. Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 218.

^r If. vi. 5. compared with John xii. 41. Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 32. and 231.

^t 1 Cor. ii. 8. compared with Pfalm xxiv.

^u Rev. xvii. 14.—xix. 16. compared with 1 Tim. vi. 15.

^v Rev. i. 8. —xxii. 13. compared with Ifai. xli. 4 —xliv. 6.—xlviii. 12.

Rev. xxi. 6. See theſe Texts vindicated in Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 233.

^x Rev. i. 8. See Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 227.

higher, or stronger can possibly be said of *God the Father*.

These are the *Titles* given to our Saviour in Scripture: They are the *very same*, which are applied to the one *supreme God*, to express his *peerless Majesty*, his *supereminent Greatness*; and to excite us to honour him proportionably to it; and therefore as they cannot with any Truth or Propriety be attributed to any *Creature*, it follows, that our Saviour to whom they are given is *truly God*. Was ever any *Angel*, or *Arch-Angel* called *Great God*, *Mighty God*, *True God*, *Jehovah*? Or how is it possible in common Sense and Reason, to give him these Appellations? It is certain, that we cannot distinguish the *one true God*, and know the *peculiar Reverence* and Honour which are due to him, but by the *Characters* and *Descriptions* which are given of him.

And if these should be applied to a *Creature*, then a *Creature* would be represented as the one true God. A *Creature* would be advanced into a *rival Deity*. The Creator of all Things would not be known from the Work of his Hands; and there could be no Religion, for want of discerning the true Object of it.

Our modern *Arians*, to evade the Force of this Argument, have endeavoured to *lessen* the *Titles* given to our Saviour, and to make

make them *inferior* to those, which are applied to the *supreme God*.

They tell us in the *first Place*, that the Term *God* is not given to *Christ* in so *high a Sense*, as it is to the *Father*; for that the *Scripture* when it mentions *God* absolutely, and by way of *Eminence*, always means the *Person of the Father* ¹. But this Assertion, as has been observed ², is not only void of Proof, but impossible to be proved; and besides, it is contrary to all *Antiquity*, and even to the Sentiments of the *ancient Arians*.

They next tell us, that *Jehovah* is not the Name of the *Essence*, but of the *Person* whose it is; and that, if the Son be *Jehovah*, then there will be *two Jehovahs*, the *Father* and *Son*. But this is no more, than poorly begging the Question. *Jehovah* is not the Name of *one Person only*, because it is attributed to *more than One*: It is given to the *Son*, as the *Ancients* have constantly asserted, in *his own Person*, and *his own Right*; and yet the *Father* and *Son* are not *two Jehovahs*; because *Scripture* which applies the Name to them both, declares also that there is but *one Jehovah*; which plainly shews, that tho' they are *two Persons*, yet but *one Jehovah*; *one necessarily existing Being*, or *Substance*.

¹ Clark's *Scripture Doctrine*, Prop. 11.

² Dr. *Waterland's* Sermons, p. 200. *first Defence*, Query 2.

They pretend also, that the *Titles* of *True God*, and *Great God*, are not meant of *Christ*, but of the *Father*^a: But this Pre-
tence has been most plainly and fully con-
futed, from the natural Construction of the
Words, and the Sentiments of the *Fathers*
upon them.

They alledge farther, that the highest
Titles of all, such as, ὕψιστος; παντοκράτωρ;
εἰς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων; εἰς θεὸς ἐξ ἑ καὶ τὰ
πάντα, are never applied to the *Son* in Scrip-
ture.

But this is a false Allegation, with respect
to the Titles of ὕψιστος, and παντοκράτωρ:

^a See Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 206. The late Dr.
Clark presumed to say, That some *Moderns* referred the
Title of *True God* in (1 *John* v. 20.) to *Christ*, but that
others, with all the *Ancients*, understood it of *God the*
Father. In which there is not a Syllable of Truth. The
Christian Church for thirteen Centuries upwards, if not
higher, understood it of *Christ*; and there is not so much
as one *Ancient*, who can be produced, interpreting the Text
of the *Father*. Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 212.

See also *Scripture Doctrine*, p. 29. and *Continued*, p. 106.
The Title of *Great God*, says the late Dr. *Clark*, upon
Titus ii. 13. is the Character of the *Father* in the *Old Testa-*
ment and *New*. But as to the Texts of the *Old Testa-*
ment, there is nothing to distinguish whether they are meant of
God the Father, or *Son*, or *Both*—and therefore it is but beg-
ging the Question, to interpret them of the *Father*. As
to the *New Testament*; there is but one Text cited by Dr.
Clark; which Text makes directly against him, being a Proof
of the *Son's* being stiled *Great God*. The *Ancients*, *Ante-*
Nicene, as well as *Post-Nicene*, interpreted *Titus* ii. 13. as we
do, and applied the Title of *Great God* to him. Dr. *Wa-*
terland's Sermons, p. 216. See *True Scripture Doctrine*, p. 26.
and *Continued*, p. 84.

For the Sense of ὑψιστος, the *most High*, or *Supreme over all*, is applied to him in my Text, where he is affirmed to be, *over all*, *God blessed for ever*; and the Title of παντοκράτωρ, *Almighty*, is expressly given him in the first of the *Revelation*, Verse the 8th: *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* Which Text is by all the *Ancients* understood of *Christ*^b; and the Title of *Lord of Hosts*, equivalent to *Lord Almighty*, is ascribed to him in other Passages of Scripture^c. With so little Truth was it affirmed by a late Author, that παντοκράτωρ is always applied to the *Father only*, in the most ancient Writers, and in Scripture^d.

As to the Titles, εἰς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, and, εἰς θεὸς ἐξ ᾧ τὰ πάντα, *one God, and Father of all*; and, *one God of whom are all Things*, it is true, that they are not applied to *God the Son*; because they are *personal* Titles, and reserved to the *Father*, to distinguish him from the *Son*.

It was necessary, that some Characters should be limited to the *Father*, to keep up the *Distinction* between the *Father* and *Son*;

^b See Dr. Waterland's Sermons, p. 227.

^c Defence, p. 451. Second Defence, p. 241, &c.

^d Id. Sermons, p. 30. Second Defence, p. 244.

^e Clark's Scripture Doctrine, p. 53. 2d Edit.

and the Scripture has so *indifferently* applied the *Divine Titles* to them *Both*, as to leave no more, than were barely necessary to this Purpose *. All the Appellations expressive of *true Deity*, are given to the Son; and as they prove him to be *truly* God, they prove him to be the *one God*, since Scripture acknowledges no more Gods than *one*; and therefore all that can be inferred from appropriating some Characters to the *Father*, is only this, that there is a *Distinction* between the *Father*, and the *Son*. The Son, though *truly* God, is not the *Father*. And who pretends that he is? We say that the Son is a *distinct Person* from the *Father*, though the *same God* with him; and if our Adversaries still object, that we prove him not the *same God*, because not the *same Person* with the *Father*, I answer in the Words of an excellent Writer †; “ That it must appear as a standing Monument against them, “ to their Shame and Confusion, that after “ we have given them every Proof, which “ can be requisite to shew, that the Son is “ strictly *God*, yet none shall be thought “ sufficient, unless it be a Proof of what “ we pretend not, of *God the Son's* being the “ *very same Person* with *God the Father*. “ This indeed is the secret meaning of all

* Dr. Waterland's Sermons, p. 281.

† Id. p. 281.

“ the Opposition made against us. Here
 “ lies the Mystery of their *Herefy*, in this
 “ one false Principle; that the Son cannot
 “ be *the supreme God*, that is, not truly,
 “ strictly and essentially God, unless he be
 “ the *very Person* of the Father. Upon this
 “ Bottom rest both *Sabellianism* and *Ari-*
 “ *anism*; and this is what the Advocates of
 “ both, have, betwixt them, been labour-
 “ ing to prove, now for fifteen hundred
 “ Years, and have met with nothing but
 “ Disappointment.”

Now, as the *distinguishing Titles*, so like-
 wise the *incommunicable Perfections* of the
 one *true God* are attributed to our Saviour:
 Such as, *Knowledge of the Heart*: *Omniscience*:
Eternity: *Unchangeableness*: *Omnipresence*;
 and, *Omnipotence*. I shall not mention the
 Texts in which these Attributes are ascribed
 to him, because they have often been cited
 in this Controversy, and moreover unan-
 swerably vindicated against all Exceptions:
 I shall only observe, that they ascribe them
 to him in the *same Phrases* and *Expressions*,
 in which they are attributed to the *one true*
God, which is a plain Argument, that they
 are applied to him in the *same Sense*, without
 any *Restriction* or *Limitation*.

Now these Perfections are *appropriately*
 Divine, and such as can't possibly belong to
 a *Creature*. Who can form a Notion of an
Eternal, Almighty, Immutable, Omnipresent
 Creature?

Creature? The Supposal of such a Being is an exprefs Contradiction, and carries in it as plain a Repugnancy of Ideas, as the Supposal of a Being existing, and not existing at the same Time; and therefore since these Attributes belong to Christ, it is evident, that he is no *Creature*, but *truly* God: And forasmuch as they are the *distinguishing* Characters of the true God, chosen to represent him to our Minds, and to excite a proper Regard and Veneration of him, it is impossible that they should be ascribed to an *inferior* Being, or to any Person not truly God. For if they were, they would cease to *distinguish* the true God; and, instead of exciting us to esteem and adore him, according to his Greatness, would only seduce us to place other Beings in the same Rank with him, and to give them the same Honour and Worship; and therefore our Saviour must be *truly* God.

To evade the Force of this Argument, it has, in the first Place, been affirmed, that *no distinguishing Character of the one supreme God is ascribed to the Son in Scripture* &c. But this is a palpable Falstiy; as any Man, by looking into the Bible, may soon perceive. *Eternity, Omniscience, Knowledge of the Heart,* and the like, which Scripture appropriates

* Reply to Dr. Waterland, p. 225.

to the one true God, are most evidently attributed to the Son.

Secondly, It has been pretended, that the Divine Perfections are ascribed to the Son in a *relative* and *subordinate*^b, that is, *restrained* and *limited* Senseⁱ. But it is plain, that they are applied to him in the *same* Expressions, and under the *same* Descriptions, which are used in their Application to the one true God; and therefore surely they are ascribed in the *same* Sense; the *same* Latitude and Extent of Signification; and to imagine them attributed in a *lower* Sense, is a meer *groundless Fiction*^k.

Besides, the Supposal of a *limited* Meaning of the Divine Perfections, which are all unlimited, is a palpable Inconsistency: The Supposal, for Instance, of a *limited* Eternity; or *limited* Omniscience; or *limited* Omnipotence, is the Supposal of an Eternity which is not Eternity; of an Omniscience which is not Omniscience; and of an Omnipotence which is not Omnipotence; that is, it is a Contradiction in Terms; and therefore it is as impossible that these Attributes should be ascribed to the Son in a *limited* Sense, as that

^b Answer to some Queries, p. 48.

Reply to Dr. Waterland, p. 236.

Modest Plea, p. 148.

ⁱ Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 92.

^k Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 92, 100.

the Scripture should be guilty of Contradictions.

It is moreover observable, that if the Divine Perfections attributed to the Son, do not prove his essential Deity, because they are capable of a *limited* Sense, then they cannot, for the same Reason, prove the Deity of the Father. They do not evince him to be the one *supreme God*, because they are capable of a *subordinate* Meaning; and therefore this Pretence strikes at the *Divinity* of the *Father* as well as the Son, and invalidates the Proof of the one together with the other.

The same Thing is observable of our *modern Arians*, with respect to the other Proofs of the Godhead of the *Father*.
 “¹ Through their imprudent Zeal against
 “ the *Divinity* of the *Son*, they have eluded
 “ all the Evidences of the *Divinity* of the
 “ *Father*. As if they were resolved to give
 “ up every Proof of the *Father's* Deity, rather than admit any which may happen
 “ to prove as much of *God the Son*.” This Charge has been so plainly proved, and so strongly pressed upon them^m, that if they have any Feeling, or Ingenuity left, they cannot but be deeply sensible, and heartily ashamed of their Misconduct.

¹ The Scripture and the Arians compared, p. 9.

^m Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 115. Second Defence, p. 245.

Thirdly, It has been pretended, that the Divine Perfections ascribed to the Son are not the same with the Father's, because *derived*, and *underived* cannot be the same.

But it is certain, the Scripture represents them to be the *same*, because it describes them by the *same* Phrases: It makes no mention of their being *derived*, or *originated* ^a, nor intimates any Difference between the *Father's* Perfections, and them; and therefore as the Scripture teaches them to be the *same*, and says nothing about *derived*, and *underived*, there is no room to advance this Distinction, or to argue from it. The Scripture has settled the Point without it; and what then has it to do in the Cause?

Besides, the Distinction of *derived*, and *underived*, does not alter the Perfections themselves, or render the Son's different from the Father's. *Eternity*, *Omniscience*, *Omnipotence*, have precisely the *same* Import, whether *derived*, or *underived*. These Terms relate only to the *Manner* in which these Attributes subsist, and affect not the *Nature*, *Kind*, or *Extent* of them; and it has been argued by some of the Ancients, that they are the *same* in both Persons, because not *equally underived* ^o. They did not conclude them to be different, because *derived*

^a Dr. Waterland's *second Defence*, p. 241.

^o Id. p. 215.

in one Person, and *underived* in the other, but to be the same in both for this very Reason. As one of the Persons is *derived* from the other, being God of God, Substance of Substance, both together are one God, one Substance; and the same Powers, and Perfections are “ common to both, as
 “ there is the same Life in Root and Branches,
 “ the same Light in the Sun and its Rays,
 “ the same Vertue in the Center, and what
 “ proceeds from it. And though no Comparisons are sufficient to illustrate Infinity,
 “ and there must be a great deal more than
 “ we are able to conceive; yet there is no
 “ Principle of Reason to contradict this Notion, that the *same* Powers, Properties,
 “ Perfections, may be diversly considered in
 “ the Fountain from whence they flow,
 “ and in the Streams to which they descend p.

In the mean Time it is observable, that the Objection of our Adversaries against the *Sameness* of the Attributes in both Persons, is drawn not from Scripture, but from their *Metaphysics* opposed to it. They join the Word *derived* to the Perfections of the Son, and thence plead, that they are not *alike* described, nor can be the *same* with the *Father's*. As for Instance; the *Duration* of the

2 Dr. Waterland's second Defence, p. 216.

Son,

Son, say they, ^a how *unlimited* soever, cannot be *alike described*, nor in *all* the same Phrases, because the Father's Existence and Duration is *unoriginate* and *underived*, the Son's *originated* and *derived*. But if we look into Scripture, we find the *eternal* Duration of both described perfectly *alike*; and no mention at all of *unoriginate*, in respect to the Father's, and *originated*, in respect to the Son's; and therefore to say, that Scripture does not describe them *alike*, because the one is *underived* and the other *derived*, is to say what is really false, and to deny a plain Fact upon the Strength of fanciful Conjecture. And the inferring from such Conjecture, that the Son's Perfections cannot be the same with the Father's, is the setting up *vain Philosophy* above Scripture, and *making the Word of God of none Effect* through Metaphysics.

This is undeniably the Case; and as it shews that the Argument of the Son's Divinity, which has now been considered, is really unanswerable; I shall now proceed secondly, to the next Argument of the same Doctrine, which is this; that our Saviour is affirmed to be *strictly* and *properly* the efficient Cause, or Creator of the Universe.

St. John declares, that ^r *All Things were*

^a Reply to Dr. Waterland, p. 243.

^r Chap. i. ver. 3.

made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made: that, ^f the World was made by him; and that, he came unto his own, his own Workmanship and Property, ^c when he came into it.

We read in the first Epistle to the Corinthians ^u, that *To us there is but one God, the Father of whom are all Things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all Things, and we by him.* That is, the Father and Son are one God and one Lord, as all Things proceed from both, and they are one individual Fountain and Cause of their Existence ^z.

The Author to the Hebrews asserts the Son's Superiority to the Angels by Citations from the Old Testament. Among other Passages quoted to this Purpose, he cites one out of the Psalms, in which the *Jehovah*, the supreme and necessary Being whom the Jews worshiped, is spoken of, and declared to be the eternal, immutable Creator, and applies it to the Son. The Words are these. *Thou Lord in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands: They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a Garment, and as a Vesture shalt*

^f Ver. 10, 11.

^c See Dr. Waterland's Sermons, p. 46, 49.

^u 1 Cor. viii. 6.

^z Dr. Waterland's Sermons, p. 54.

thou fold them up, and they shall be changed : But thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail y. These Terms of creating are used by the God of *Israel*, to express the Truth of his Godhead, and the Greatness of his Majesty; and since they are applied to the Son, the Son is affirmed to be *Jehovah*, who displayed his Divine Power and Perfections in the Work of Creation.

With the like Strength and Fulness of Expression, *St. Paul* declares in his first Chapter to the *Colossians*, that *By him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers : All Things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist.*

This Passage asserts him to be *properly* Creator in the strongest Terms. It ascribes to his Creation the several Parts of the Universe; not only the inferior and sublunary, but the *highest* and *noblest*; the *Things in Heaven, and invisible*; and among them the most eminent Orders of celestial Beings, to shew that no Creature whatever had *any other* Author of its Existence, nor is exempted from a *natural* Dependence upon him.

y For the full Vindication and Explication of this Passage, see *Dr. Waterland's Defence*, p. 95. and *Sermons*, p. 63. and *Dr. Knight's Sermons*, p. 55.

It affirms farther, that all Things were created *for* him, as well as *by* him, to shew that he did not produce them as an *Instrument* only, which worketh *for another*, but as the true *efficient* Cause, directing them to his *own* Service and Glory.

It affirms moreover, that *by him all Things consist*; to shew that, as the whole Universe, the *World's visible and invisible* received their Being from his Power, so they are continued in it by his Providence; that, he is their *Preserver*, as well as *Creator*, by whom they are sustained, and enabled to perform their several Functions. Certainly, nothing higher or stronger can possibly be said of God the *Father*, to shew him, to be *truly Creator* and *Preserver* of the Universe! In Conformity to this Doctrine of Scripture, the *primitive Writers* unanimously assert our Saviour to be *Creator* of the Universe. They ascribe the Work of Creation to him, as much as to the Father: They style him *Creator* in the *strongest* and *fullest* Terms: They give him the *highest* Titles which can express *creative Power*, and which our Adversaries pretend to be reserved to the *Father*. This has been proved by plain Testimonies out of their Writings, in which the Titles of *Maker*, *Builder*, *Producer of all Things*, *great Architect of the Universe*, are applied to him². The Ancients in gene-

² Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 186, &c.

ral, quite down from the Times of the Apostles, interpreted the Text of *Genesis* ^b, in which God is introduced, speaking in the plural Number, *Let us make Man in our Image*, of a Plurality of Persons in the Deity. They say that God spake to the Son, or to the Son, or *Holy Ghost*; and infer from his speaking to them, that they jointly concurred in the Creation of Man.

The *Jews* had interpreted this Text of a Plurality of Persons, and thought that God spake to his Angels, inviting them to concur with him in the making of Man. But the Christians wisely observing, how absurd it was to suppose, that Angels could be joined with God the Father in the Work of Creation, which is infinitely beyond the Power of any Creature, rejected this Interpretation, and concluded that the Persons spoken to, were the Son and Spirit of God: And as it hence appears, that they believed the Son and Spirit to be *Divine uncreated* Persons, so they taught that the Creation was effected by them in Concurrence with the Father. They supposed that the three Persons were *jointly* concerned in it, and produced the Universe by their *united* Operation.

^a Gen. i. 26. See Dr. *Knights* Sermons, p. 13, &c. Dr. *Waterland's* Sermons, p. 69. and *Second Defence*, p. 335.

They admitted at the same Time a Distinction in the manner of operating, and reserved to the Father, as first Person, a suitable Priority. They represented him, as *designing* and *ordering* the World; and the Son and Spirit as *executing* his Will; which could not be done, as they constantly taught, by *Angel*, or *Arch-Angel*, or *any Creature* whatever. They exempted therefore the Son and Spirit from the Number of *Creatures*; and their Intention in assigning them a different Province from the Father, could be nothing more, than to keep up a Distinction of Persons in the Godhead^b, and the Pre-eminence of the Father, as *first in Order*. And as they ascribed to them the *executing Part*, they rather excluded the Father, than them, from being *truly Efficient*, or *properly Creator*^c, who only gave out Commands. But in reality they excluded neither. They believed them to be in Operation, as they are in Essence, *undivided*, while *distinct*: And if their Words have but a fair and equitable Construction, all will be well.

Thus it appears that *Antiquity* conspires with *Scripture*, in affirming our Saviour to be *strictly* and *properly* Creator.

^a Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, p. 184.

^c *Second Defence*, p. 337.

Now,

They

Now, if this be the Case, the Conclusion plainly is, that he is *truly*, and by *Nature*, God.

For in the first Place; the same *Scripture* and *Antiquity* which assert him to be *properly* Creator, assert also, that the Work of Creation is properly *Divine*, and peculiar to *God alone*.

Creation is every where represented in Scripture as a *Divine Work*^d; as the certain *Characteristick* of the *one true God*; as the Mark of his Superiority to all the Gods of the Nations; and the Ground upon which all Homage and Adoration are due to him.
 * The giving Being to the World, and to all Things existing in it, is most elegantly displayed, and most frequently insisted on in

^d This appears from the following Texts.

2 Kings xix. 5.	Heb. iii. 4.	Jerem. x. 11.
Job xxvi. 7.	Rom. i. 20.	
Pf. xevi. 5.	Isai. xl. 12.	
lxxxix. 11, 12.	xlvi. 5.	
xix. 1.	xlvi. 1.	
	xlvi. 5.	

* *Creation* is made the Ground of *Worship* by St. Paul in Rom. i. 25. where he directs us to worship the *Creator*, in Opposition to all *Creature-worship*. From whence it appears that he supposes the *Creator* to be no *Creature*, but *God, blessed for ever*; and that Scripture knows no *Medium* between *God* and *Creature*, but includes all Things, and all Persons whatever, under that Distinction, Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 96.

Hezekiah prays to God, as *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, 2 Kings xix. 15.

See also the aforecited Texts of *Isaiab* and *Jeremiah*; and besides them, *Rev.* iv. 10.

the sacred Pages, to raise in us just Ideas of God's supereminent Majesty; and Sentiments of Esteem and Veneration suitable to his excellent Greatness.

It is the Doctrine likewise of the *primitive Writers*, that the Work of creating is peculiar to *God only*; an indisputable Mark of a *Divine immutable Nature*, and what no *Creature* whatever can be concerned in. They rejected the vain Conceits of several *Hereticks*, who asserted that this *lower World* was made by *Angels*, or Powers *inferior* to God. And, "no sooner did the *Arian* Controversy arise, but they charged the *Arians* with great Inconsistency, as making a *Creature* of the Son of God, and yet admitting him to be *Creator*. They scrupled not to tell them, that this was copying after *Valentinus*, and reviving the Principles of the *Gnosticks*; that it was confounding the Ideas of *Creator* and *Creature*; and was all over contradictory and repugnant. No Argument bore harder upon the *Arians* than this, as appears by the Perplexity and Confusion they were in upon it; not being able to come to any fixed and certain Resolution in it. Scripture and Catholick Tradition appeared clear, strong and full, for the Son's being properly and strictly Framer, and Maker

(Dr. Waterland's Sermons, p. 100.

M

" of

“ of the World; and there were but few
 “ in Comparifon that durft go fuch Lengths,
 “ as openly to deny it. On the other Hand,
 “ to make a *Creature Creator*, was in a
 “ manner unheard of, except among *Here-*
 “ *ticks*, and was, befides, harfh and shock-
 “ ing, even to common Sence.”

Since then *Scripture* and *Antiquity* affirm our Saviour to be *properly* Creator, and the Work of Creation to be *peculiarly Divine*, it is evident, that they affirm him to be *truly God*.

Secondly, We may confider, that if *he made every Thing that was made*, the Confequence is plain, that he himfelf was not made. For when the Scripture declares, that *By him were all Things created in Heaven, and in Earth, vifible and invifible*, it is manifefit that *he is excepted*, who created all Things. He cannot be in the Number of Creatures, which were *all* produced by him: And if he was not *created*, it is certain, that he had no *beginning* of Exiftence; and if not, then he muft be *eternally* exiftent, and, in Confequence, *God bleffed for ever*.

Thirdly, We may confider that, as *by the Greatnefs and Beauty of the Creatures, proportionably the Maker of them is feen*, fo all the Marks of Majefty, and Power, and Wifdom, discoverable in the Univerfe, are fo many Arguments of the Wifdom, and Power, and Majefty of our Saviour: And as they have

have been often urged with invincible Force against *Atheists* and *Scepticks* in Proof of a Deity, so they may as strongly be pleaded against *Arians* and *Socinians*, in proof of Christ's *essential Divinity*; and they equally proclaim him, to as many as believe Scripture, the *eternal, all wise and omnipotent God*, as they do to Mankind in general, the Existence of such a Being.

Indeed, if we well reflect on the several Parts of the Universe; on the inanimate, the sensitive, the rational World; the Beauties and Powers, and Perfections, illustrious in each; and reflect at the same Time that our Saviour *created* them; that it was he who *gave Being* to them all, and imparted the Capacities, wherewith they are severally adorned, we cannot help concluding, that he must be God. The Conclusion rises naturally in the Mind; and a Man cannot avoid it, unless his Eyes are blinded, and he is steel'd against Conviction, by inveterate Prejudice.

This Argument for our Saviour's Deity, has ever grievously distress'd the *Arians*, and forced them to have recourse to *mean Artifices* to evade it. Their chief Project has been to *undervalue his Part* in the Creation, and to make it *meerly instrumental*.

To this Purpose it has first been asserted, that *the Scripture, and the ancient Fathers, always and uniformly say, that the Son's Part*

in the Creation, was the fulfilling of the Will, and executing the Orders of the Father &c.

But this is a notorious Falſity.

As to *Scripture*, it never once ſays, that *the Son's Part in the Creation was the fulfilling of the Will, and executing the Orders of the Father*: But it aſſerts on the contrary, that the Son is the Lord *Jehovah^h* who laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Work of *whoſe Hands the Heavens are*; and that all Things were made for him, and are ſuſtained by himⁱ.

As to the *Ancients*: Though they ſometimes repreſented the Son as *executing the Orders of the Father*, yet *they do not always and uniformly ſpeak in this Manner*. They often aſſert the Son to be *truly and properly*

^g Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 186.

^h Heb. i. 10.

ⁱ Col. i. 16. In the Song which *Moses* was commanded to teach the People, and is recorded in *Deuteronomy* 32, the Son is ſtiled *Creator*; (for the God ſpoken of in this Song is the *Son*, becauſe it is cited by *St. Paul* to prove his Excellency) the *Creator of Man* in the ſame Style with the *Father himſelf*; in Terms of *Efficiency*; ver. 6, 15. And though *Creating* be attributed to him in another Style; to wit, that the World was made *by him*, yet it can no more be inferred from hence, that the *Son* is not *proper Creator*, than it can, that the *Father* is not *proper Deliverer*, becauſe the People are ſaid to be ſaved *by him*. Thus, the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *By thee I have run through a Troop*; and in *Hoſea* i. 7. *I will ſave them by the Lord their God*. The Lord their God is their *proper Deliverer*, though they are ſaid to be ſaved *by him*. The Son then is alſo *proper Creator*, though the World is ſaid to be made *by him*. See Dr. Knight's Sermons, p. 48, 49.

SERMON V. 165

Creator^k. They represent him as *Counsellor* to the Father^l; and declare, that all Things were made *for him*^m, as well as by him. This is undoubted Fact; and the asserting of the contrary is a *shameful Misreport*.

Secondly, It has been pretended, that the Creation is ascribed to the Son, "Not as being the Person, *of whom*, and *from whom* are all Things, as the *original* and *supreme* Cause; but as being the Person, *by or through whom*, as the *ministerial* Cause, the Father made all Thingsⁿ."

But it is evident, that the Creation is ascribed to the Son, as being *truly* and *properly* Creator. It is ascribed to him in as full and strong Terms, as it is to the Father; and therefore though it be sometimes attributed to him in *another Style*, yet no Inference can be drawn from it, in Diminution of his *creative Power*.

It is said, for Instance, that all Things were made *by him*, or *through him*: Will you argue from hence, that he was only an

^k See above, p. 28.

^l See Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 236.

^m Barnabas in his Epistle, c. 4. p. 218. c. 9. p. 238, says, Ἐν αὐτῷ πάντα, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν: Very near the Expression of St. Paul in Col. i. 16. Whose Companion he was: τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτόν.

Tatian p. 22. Edit. Oxon. Ἀυτὸς ἰαυτῷ τὴν ὕλην δημιουργήσας.

Clem. Alex. p. 7. Edit. Oxon. Ὁ τὰ πάντα δημιουργήσας. Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, p. 189.

ⁿ Reply to Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, p. 184.

Instrument in the Creation, or *ministerial* Cause of it? No! You cannot do it; because the Scripture asserts, that he was *properly* Creator; and precludes by so doing any Argument of this Kind. It is said likewise with respect to the Father, that *of him*, and *from him* are all Things. Will you argue from the meer Force of this Stile, that the *Father only* was the *efficient* Cause of all Things? Neither will this bear any more than the other; and the Reason is, because the Scripture asserts the Son to be *Jehovah*, the Maker of the World; and declares by so doing, that he was the *efficient* Cause of all Things, as well as the Father, and that, *of him*, and *from him*, they are.

In short, as the Son is affirmed to be *properly* Creator, there is no Weight in the Criticism upon the Forms of Expression, in which the Creation is severally attributed to Father and Son. The Scripture makes no Distinction in the Import of these Forms; not such especially, as our *Arians* have projected. It applies *by whom*, and *through whom* to the *Son*, whom it declares at the same Time, to be as *truly efficient* as the Father; or to have the same creative Power, as the Person, to whom it applies, *of whom*, and *from whom*; and therefore it has well been observed, that “ The Scripture itself
 “ has put an end to the Disputes about the
 “ Propositions, and that all the Criticisms
 “ of

“ of our Adversaries about them, if intend-
 “ ed to prove, that the Son of God is
 “ not properly Creator, are groundless and
 “ false^o.”

Thirdly, It has been pretended, that tho’
 in these two Forms of Expression, *of whom*
are all Things; and, *by whom are all Things*;
 it cannot be determined from the meer
 Force of the Prepositions, that, *of whom*,
 signifies an *Efficient*, and *by whom* a *Minis-*
tring Cause: Yet, when they are used in ex-
 press *Contradistinction* to each other; as when
 it is said with respect to the Father, *of whom*
are all Things; and with respect to Christ,
by whom are all Things, they will then de-
 termine the Son to be the Father’s *Minister*
 in making the World^p.

But it is certain, that whatever Significan-
 cy they may have when used in this manner,
 yet they can’t possibly import, that the Son
 is only an *Instrument* in the Creation, or the

^o Dr. Waterland’s *Sermons*, p. 66.

^p “ If it be pretended, says Dr. Waterland, which is
 “ Dr. Clark’s last Resort, that though the Use of those Pre-
 “ positions *singly*, be not sufficient, yet when they are used
 “ in express *Contradistinction* to each other, they are of
 “ more Significancy; I answer first, that I desire to know of
 “ what Significancy they are in *Rom. xi. 36.* where they
 “ seem to be used in *express Contradistinction* to each other;
 “ and if that Text be meant of the Father, it affirms that
 “ *all Things are THROUGH him*; and secondly, Admitting
 “ they are of Significancy, they may signify only a *real Dis-*
 “ *tinction* of Persons, as St. Basil well observes,” &c. *De-*
fence, p. 185.

Father's *Minister*, because the Scripture most plainly asserts the contrary. And therefore since we know that they can't have this Import, we must conclude, that all the Significance they can have, is to shew the *Distinction* of Persons, or the *Priority of Order* belonging to the Father. This is the Truth of the Case; and is the whole of what any *Catbolick Writer* pretended to infer from the two Forms of Expression. Indeed *Origen* and *Eusebius* have been cited, as inferring more from them; but it appears, that all they inferred was the *Pre-eminence* of the Father; and not any *Difference in Nature* between the Father and Son ^q.

It is evident upon the whole, that the Proof of the Son's *creative Power*, or of his being truly the *Efficient Cause* of the Universe, remains firm and unshaken. The Pretences that have been thought of to weaken it are utterly incompetent. They were baffled and despised, when first advanced^r; and have of late been the more exposed, by being again revived. The Son

^q See Dr. *Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 338.

^r The *Arians* had many Arts and Subterfuges to lessen the Son's Part in the Work of Creation, the same that are made use of by their Successors at this Day. But all would not do. Scripture was plain and clear; and Tradition full and strong; and was not to be bore down by little Quirks and Subtilties. In fine, *Truth* prevailed; *Arianism* daily lost Ground; and this very Argument from the Son's Concern in the Work of Creation, contributed as much as any other to sink it, &c. Dr. *Waterland's Sermons*, p. 102.

therefore

SERMON V. 169

therefore is *properly* Creator; and if so, then *truly* God. This is so plain and affecting an Argument, that it hung as a dead Weight upon the *Arian* Cause, and contributed as much as any to sink it. And as it had this Effect in *former* Days, so it will have the same *now*. It must strike upon all, who have any Regard left for *Scripture* and *Antiquity*; and nothing but Obstinacy and Perverseness can resist its Force.



SERMON

SERMON VI.

ROMANS ix. *ver.* 5.

*Of whom as concerning the Flesh
Christ came, who is over all, God
blessed for ever.*

THE Argument for our Saviour's Divinity, which we are now *first* to consider is this, that the Scripture which absolutely forbids the *Worship* of any *Creature*; which appropriates *all religious Worship* to *God alone*, in Opposition to all other Beings, doth require us at the same Time to *worship* and *adore* him.

The Royal Prophet, for Instance, speaking in the second *Psalms* of the *Son of God*, directs the *Kings* and *Judges* of the Earth to *reverence* him, and pronounces a Blessing on all those, who *put their Trust in him*.

The

The Prophet *Isaiah*, foretelling that the *Jew* and *Gentile* should conspire against Christ, gives this Direction. *Fear ye not their Fear, neither be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself; and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread.* That is, Fear ye not the Rage and Opposition of the *Jew*; nor the Power and Policy of the *Gentile*; but trust in, and fear, and obey Christ the Son of God^a. This is the Meaning which the same Spirit of God, who delivered the Passage, puts upon it; and St. *Peter* in plain Allusion to it, says, *Be not afraid of their Terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord Christ*^b.

St. *Paul*, among other Proofs of the Son's Superiority to the Angels, brings this as one, that he is the *Object of their Worship*. *When the Father bringeth in the first begotten into the World, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him*^c.

^a See Dr. *Knight's* Sermons, p. 104; who proves that by the *Lord of Hosts*, the *Sanctification* and *Fear* of whom the Prophet directs, Christ, the Son of God is meant, according to St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*.

^b 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. The Words in our Translation are, *Sanctify the Lord God in your Hearts*. But in the *Syriac* and *Italick* Versions they are, *Sanctify the Lord Christ*; which Dr. *Mills* thinks the true Reading, *Mil. in locum*, & in *Proleg.* p. 129. Col. 1.

^c *Heb.* i. 6. For the full Explication of which Passage, see Dr. *Knight's* Sermons, p. 39. To which may be added *Hammond* on *Psalms* xcvi. Note *b*.

The same Apostle represents him as the Object of our *Faith*, and *Trust*, and *religious Addresses*. *Whosoever*, says he, *believeth in him shall not be ashamed: Whosoever calleth on the Name of the Lord shall be saved*. St. Peter also says, that *Whosoever believeth on him shall not be confounded*; and that, as he is a *precious Stone to Believers*, so to them which be *disobedient*, the *Stone which the Builders disallowed*, the same is become the *Head of the Corner*^d.

Our Saviour himself demanded *Religious Worship*. He required his Disciples to *believe in him*, as they *believed in God*. He declared, that *He who honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father*; and that, all Judgment was committed to him for this Purpose, that Men might be induced by so awakening a Circumstance to reverence him suitably to his *Divine Dignity*, and *pay him the same Honour which they do to the Father*^e.

^d These Passages of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* are cited from Passages of *Isaiah*, in which the *Lord of Hosts* is spoken of, and are applied by them to *Jesus Christ*; therefore *Jesus Christ* is the *Lord of Hosts* spoken of in *Isaiah*, because these Apostles could not misinterpret the Passages they cited; and since the Person spoken of is represented as the Object of *Faith*, and *Trust*, and *Invocation*, which are Acts of Worship payable to none but the *true God*, it farther follows, that *Jesus Christ* is the *true God*. See Dr. *Knight's Sermons*, p. 106, &c. p. 114.

^e Joh. v. 22, 23.

We read that the Disciples, when they were in Danger of Shipwreck, besought him to save them; *Lord save us; we perish*^f; and that they all *worshipped him*^g as he went up into Heaven. The Apostles directed this Prayer to him, *Lord, increase our Faith*^h. St. Thomas cried out to him in a Transport of Devotion, *My Lord and my God*ⁱ: And St. Stephen, *full of the Holy Ghost*, prayed to him with his dying Breath, and used the same Words which he himself addressed to his Father upon the Cross^k.

He is oftentimes *distinctly* prayed to, for *Grace*, and *Peace*, and *Mercy*; and often *joined with the Father* in Petitions for these Blessings^l. They are implored of him *singly*, as well as *jointly* with the Father. He is adored by *Angels*, and by every Creature^m; and

^f Matt. viii. 25.

^g Luk. xxiv. 51, 52.

^h Luk. xvii. 5.

ⁱ Joh. xx. 28.

^k Acts vii. 59, 60. *And they stoned Stephen calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.*—*Lord, lay not this Sin to their Charge.* In the like Form of Words our Saviour prayed to the Father upon the Cross. *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.*—*Father, forgive them.* Luke xxiii. 34, 46. See the *Remarks* on the late Dr. Clark's *Exposition of the Catechism*, p. 11.

^l The Texts proving this are mentioned in the *Remarks*, p. 11, 12. and the Practice of the *Primitive Ages* is appealed to, as agreeing entirely with Scripture Accounts. But this has been proved over and over by several Hands.

^m Rev. v. 11, 12, 13. And in the eighth Verse of this Chapter, we read thus. *And when he* [the Root of David, ver. 5.] *had taken the Book; the four Beasts, and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every*

and glorified in the same manner as the Father. *Dominion and Glory for ever and ever*, are ascribed to him; sometimes by himselfⁿ, and sometimes together with the Father^o.

Now, the same Scripture which gives us these Precepts and Examples for the *Religious Worship* of our Saviour, doth most plainly declare, that *God only* is to be worshiped: That, he alone in Opposition to all other Beings is the Object of Worship, and that no Kind or Degree of it is to be offered to any Creature.

The first Commandment, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*^p, confines all Religious Worship to *God alone*. For it is generally concluded by Expositors, that the true Sense of this Command is, that we must worship no other Being but the true God. In like manner it is declared in *Deuteronomy*^q, *Thou*

one of them Harps, and Golden Vials full of Odors, which are the Prayers of the Saints : And they sung a new Song, &c.

In which Passage, the Worship of the Son is described in the Characters of the *Temple Service*; which is an Instruction to us, that the highest Worship paid by the *Jews* to the true God, is due to the Son both from Men and Angels. Dr. Knight's Sermons, p. 50.

ⁿ 1 Pet. iv. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

• Rev. v. 13. vii. 10.

^p Exod. xx. 3. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me; that is, *besides me*: For the Word in the *Septuagint* is *ωλον εμου*; and the *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Arabick* render it to the same Sense.

^q Deut. vi. 13, 14. x. 20. xiii. 4.

shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and not go after other Gods. Him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave. Which Declaration is referred to, and explained by our Saviour in these Words; *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*^r.

Now, as in these Texts God plainly appropriates all Worship to himself, so, for the perpetual Exclusion of all other Beings from any Share of it, he forbids his People to regard any Pretences whatever, any Appearances of his own Authority, which should be offered to tempt them to serve other Gods. *Though a Prophet*^s, says he, *should arise, and perform Signs and Wonders, in order to induce you to go after other Gods, which ye have not known; ye shall not hearken to that Prophet; ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and serve him, and cleave unto him.* Whence it appears, that God absolutely reserved all Worship to himself, and eternally excluded all Creatures from it.

To which we may add, that he claims Religious Worship in Opposition to other Beings, because he is *Jehovah*, because *Creator* and *Preserver* of the World^t; which is a Reason that confines it *solely* and *unalterably*

^r Matt. iv. 10.

^s Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

^t Isai. xl. 11, 25. xlv. 5, 6, 7.

² Kings xix. 15. Jer. x. 10, 11, 12.

bly to himself, and for ever precludes every Creature.

In the *New Testament* we find that *St. Paul* charges the Heathens with *Idolatry*, for their joining the Worship of *Creatures* with the Worship of the *supreme God* ^u. For he says, that *When they knew God, yet they glorified him not as God, but changed his Glory into Images, and worshiped and served the Creature, more than, or besides, the Creator, who is blessed for ever*: So that the *Creator* only is to be worshiped. All Religious Homage is to be paid to him, and *him alone*; and he who offers any Degree of it to a *Creature* is guilty of *Idolatry*.

The same Apostle censures the *Galatians* as *not knowing God* in their Heathen State, because they then *did Service to them which by Nature are no Gods* ^x; and he hereby teaches us, that God alone, *who is by Nature God*, ought to be worshiped and served by us.

St. Paul moreover warns the *Colossians*, *not to be beguiled by any Man of their Reward in a voluntary Humility, and worshiping of Angels* ^y. In which Words he condemns in general the *Worship* of Angels, which are the most glorious and excellent Creatures, and the most highly beneficial in

^u Rom. i. 21.

^y Col. ii. 18.

^x Gal. iv. 8.

their Offices to Men : And he teaches us in Consequence, that we are not to worship *any Creature*, at all, let his Dignity be ever so great, or his Actions relative to us ever so engaging. And accordingly we read, that the Angel refused an Act of Worship offered him by St. *John* ^z, saying peremptorily, *See thou do it not* ; and giving this Rule upon it, *Worship God* ; that is, remember that God only is to be worshiped.

St. Peter likewise ^a, when *Cornelius* fell down at his Feet to worship him, took him up, saying, *Stand up ; I my self also am a Man*.
 “ Offer not to me an Act of Adoration, for
 “ I am but a Creature as you are. God alone has a Right to Religious Worship,
 “ and you must not fall down to any Being
 “ besides him. Stand up therefore ; I my
 “ self also am a Man.

In like manner ^b, the Apostles *Barnabas* and *Paul*, when the *Lycaonians* would have done Sacrifice unto them, *rent their Clothes*, and ran in among the People, crying out, and saying, *Sirs, why do ye these Things ? We also are Men of like Passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these Vanities unto the living God, which made Heaven, and*

^z Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 9. Which might be done out of a sudden Transport, or not then knowing that it was a meer Angel. *Second Defence*, p. 373.

^a Acts. x. 25, 26.

^b Acts xiv. 14, 15.

the Earth, and the Sea, and all Things that are therein. “Ye Men of *Lycaonia*, we are
 “extremely concerned that ye should at-
 “tempt to do Sacrifice unto us. We are
 “of the *same Nature*, and Subject to *the*
 “*same* Frailties with your selves. It is our
 “Message and Design to convince you, that
 “ye should refrain from doing what ye are
 “about to do, from offering Religious Wor-
 “ship to Creatures, and that ye should
 “henceforward Worship none but the liv-
 “ing God, who alone being Creator of all
 “Things, alone hath a Right to Worship.
 “Forbear therefore we beseech you these
 “Things: We also are Men of like Passions
 “with you.”

Thus it appears, that the Rule of Wor-
 ship laid down in Scripture, is to worship
 God alone; to worship him, *exclusively of all*
other Beings whatever; and since the same
 Scripture directs and requires the Worship
 of our Saviour, the Consequence is plain,
 that it asserts him to be no Creature, but
truly, and by *Nature* God.

So pressing is this Argument, that it has
 drove the *Arians* to the last Extremity, as
 appears by the Shifts they have invented to
 evade its Force.

First, It is pretended, that Worship is
 distinguished into two Sorts; *Supreme* and
Inferior; the *Supreme*, appropriated to the
 one

one *supreme* God; and the *Inferior*, payable by his Appointment, to other Beings; and it is this *inferior* Worship, which is offered to Christ.

But there is no manner of Ground for supposing *two Kinds* of Worship. As the one invariable Rule of Scripture, is to worship God alone, it is evident, that all Worship is *invariably one, and the same*. It is all Divine and *Supreme*, because appropriated to God; and there can be no *inferior* or *mediate* Worship distinct from it. The Notion of such Worship is really a Contradiction. It is the Notion of an *inferior, supreme* Homage; of a *communicable, reserved* Privilege; of a *Creatural, Divine* Adoration.

We never read of *two distinct* Worships, either before the Gospel, or after it. There is no mention of *two sorts* of *Sacrifice*, or *Prayer*, or *Vows*, or *Oaths*, or any other Acts of Religious Worship. They are all of one and the same Nature; Acknowledgments of the *Divine* Perfections, and having God alone for their Object. And since God has claimed *all Worship* to himself, and claimed it because he is Maker and Governor of the World, it is evident, that he cannot, consistently with this Claim, appoint *any Creature* to be worshiped. He has precluded himself from doing it, because it is not to

be done without contradicting himself, or giving opposite Directions, which is impossible.

If *inferior* Worship were payable to *Creatures*, any *Jew* might have sacrificed to the *Gods of the Nations*, without breaking the Law which ordered him to sacrifice to *the Lord only*. The *Heathens* might have worshiped their several Deities, and *Cornelius* have fallen down before St. *Peter* without any Offence. We may pray to Angels, and worship Saints departed, provided we design them only *inferior* Worship; and therefore upon this Principle, neither *Heathens* nor *Papists* are chargeable with *Idolatry*. But since God has reserved all Worship to himself, and the Design both of the Law and the Gospel was to fix our Religious Services on him alone, it is evident, that the Worship of any Being *inferior* to God (which is the Meaning of *inferior Worship*, if it has any) is acting contrary to the Divine Command, and to one main End of *revealed Religion*. And hereupon we think, that they who plead for such Worship, are Advocates for *Idolatry*, and alike involved with the *Pagans* in the Practice of it. They suppose that a Creature may be worshiped by the Command of God, though God has *absolutely prohibited* the Worship of any Creature. They make the Gospel guilty of the
very

very Crime it every where condemns, which is *Creature Worship*; and they expose it hereby to Insult and Contempt, as a *contradictory* and *idolatrous* Doctrine.

But Secondly, It is farther pretended^c, that in the Texts of the Old Testament relating to Worship, the Characters are always *Personal*. Worship is appropriated to *one Person* only; to wit, the Person of the Father; and consequently, unless Worship be distinguished into two Sorts, *Supreme* and *Inferior*, it will follow, either that Jesus Christ ought not to be worshiped at all; or, if he be, that he is the very Father himself, to whom *alone* Worship is appropriated.

But it is certain, that the Texts of the Old Testament do not belong to the *Father only*, or appropriate Worship to him, exclusively of the Son. They have been thought by *all Antiquity* to relate to the Person of the Son^d; and there is this good Reason why they do so, because the Son is declared in other Passages to be *truly God* as well as the Father, and the proper Object of *Religious Worship*. So that the Person of the

^c Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p 357. So likewise the *Modest Plea Continued*, says in p. 34. Were the Worship paid to Christ the *very same* as that to the Father, it would follow, not only that he is the *one God*, in Opposition to any distinct inferior Being, but it would follow, that he is *That Person*, *That Me*, *That Him*, mentioned in the Texts.

^d Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, p. 380.

Son is included in the *one God*, to whom all Worship is reserved; and he is *distinguished*, consequently from the Father, though the *same* Worship be ascribed to him, and there is no Need of devising an *inferior* Worship, to make the Distinction.

If it were the Doctrine of the Old Testament that the Father *only* is to be worshiped, then would the New Testament be contrary to the Old, in directing the Worship of the *Son*; neither could the Father appoint him *any* Worship, having reserved *all* to himself. It is in vain to suppose, for the reconciling of this Matter, that only *supreme* Worship is appropriated to the Father; for there is no Ground to support this Supposition. If the Texts of the Old Testament are interpreted of the Father *only*, they appropriate *all* Worship to him; not all *supreme* Worship, but *absolutely all*: He being the *I*, the *Thou*, the *Me*, whom *alone* we are directed to worship; and therefore upon the Foot of this Interpretation, the Son is excluded from *any* Worship; and the *New Testament*, which expressly commands us to worship him, confronts and contradicts the *Old*. So that the *Arians* can neither worship the Son consistently with the *Old Testament*, nor make the *Old* and the *New* to agree together.

But

But if we understand the Laws about Worship to *include the Son* together with the Father, then we may worship him in Conformity to them, and Scripture is harmonious throughout. The *New Testament* which *expressly* directs the Worship of the Son, and manifests his Right to it, in asserting his Divine Character, is perfectly consonant to the *Old*, and opens the full Sense of it to us; and our Worship of him stands on the united Foundation of *both Testaments*, and on their entire Agreement with each other.

Thirdly, It is pretended, that Christ cannot have the *same* Title to Worship with the Father, because it cannot truly be said, that he to whom the Father has committed all Judgment, has the *same* Title to Worship as the Father, who committed all Judgment to him; or that he *by whom* God created all Things, has the *same* Title to Adoration as God the Father hath, who created all Things by him.

But this is *meer Chicanery*. For the Rule of Worship laid down in Scripture, being to worship *God only*, the *Creator* in Opposition to *all Creatures*, it is plain, that there is but *one Title* to Worship, namely, *True Divinity*.

* *Modest Plea Continued*, p. 36.

Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 392.

and *Creative Power*. And this the Scripture ascribes to the Son. For it does not merely say, that the Father *committed Judgment* to the Son, and created all Things *by him*; but it asserts moreover, that the Son is as *truly God and Creator*, as the Father; being the Lord *Jehovah* who founded the Earth, and formed the Heavens; therefore it declares that he has the *one appropriate Claim* to Religious Worship, or the *same Title* to Adoration which the Father has.

Fourthly, It is pretended^f, that the Worship of Christ can't be the *same* with that of the Father, because as he is *Mediator*, the Worship paid to him in that Capacity, can't possibly be paid to the *one supreme God*.

But the Worship of Christ, though he be Mediator, is the *same* with that of the Father, because he is a *Divine Mediator*. The Consideration of his *Godhead* goes along with his Office, and puts his Worship upon the same Reason and Foundation with that of the Father. But as it is paid to him under the Conception of Mediator, it cannot in that View be paid to the Father, because he cannot be conceived as Mediator; that is, we cannot apply a Character to the Father

^f *Clark's Scripture Doctrine*, p. 343. 2d Edit.

Modest Plea Continued, p. 33.

Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 361.

which

which he has not, or worship him in a Capacity peculiar to the Son ^g. But still the Worship of the Son is *equally* Divine with that of the Father, because he is *equally* God. He has in common with the Father the same Divine Nature, while he is distinguished from him by the Character of Mediator. And as there is the *same* Divine Nature in both, the Worship of both, tho' under their distinct Characters, rests upon the *same* Ground, the *essential* Divinity common to both.

Fifthly, It is pretended ^h, that the Worship of the Father is founded on *his supreme, independent, original, underived Power and Dominion; on the eternal Law of Nature* ⁱ: Whereas the Worship of the Son is founded on the Command of the Father; on the Powers given him after his Incarnation; which shews his Worship to be *different* from that of the Father; and *inferior* to it.

But this Pretence is absolutely false, with respect both to the *Father* and the *Son*. For neither is the Worship of the Father founded on his *original, underived Power*; that is, on his being *Father*, or *Unbegotten*; nor is the Worship of the Son founded on the Command of the Father, or on any Powers

^g See Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 377.

^h *Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence*, p. 363.

ⁱ *Observations on Dr. Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 84.

committed

committed to him as Mediator. But as the Father's Worship is founded on his *Divine Nature*, and *Creative Power*, so is the Son's founded on *the same*; that is, he is asserted to have the *same* Divine Nature, and Creative Power, the *alone Foundation* of Worship. And though the Scripture has not *expressly* said, that he is to be worshiped as the *supreme God*, yet it has said so by *evident Consequence*, having declared that we must worship God only, *the one God supreme*, and directed us at the same Time to worship the Son.

It is true, that the Father has *commanded* him to be worshiped. But is his Worship for that Reason of an *inferior* Sort? or *founded merely* on that Command? Why, the Father has *commanded* himself to be worshiped; and our Saviour has *commanded* us to worship the Father. Is his Worship therefore *subordinate*? or founded purely in these *Commands*? What can be more ridiculous? The true Inference from the Father's *commanding* the Worship of the Son, is, that he is *truly God*, and vested with a just Right to Worship, because otherwise the Father could not give such a Command. He could not do it without Inconsistency, having directed us to worship God *alone*, exclusively of all others.

Neither

Neither is it supposable, that the Worship of the Son is founded *on the Powers given him after his Incarnation*; because he is declared to have *created the Universe*^k, and to *have been God before the Creation*^l; that is, to have had a Right to Worship, and the very *same* Right with the Father, *antecedently to his Incarnation*. Therefore no Powers whatever committed to him *afterwards*, could be the *Foundation* of his Worship, or give him so high and just a Claim to it as he had before.

Indeed, it is a manifest Inconsistency in the *Arians*, to found the Worship of Christ upon the Powers given him *after* his Incarnation; because, as they allow him to have been God and Creator *before* it, they allow in Consequence that he had a Right to Worship; and therefore their founding his Worship purely on these Powers, is contradicting their own Principles, or arguing, in Opposition to themselves, that he was not God

^k Heb. i. 10. In which Place St. Paul affirms, that He laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens were the Work of his Hands.

^l St. John says, chap. i. ver. 1. that He was God before the Creation. Therefore he was adorable, the Object to which Scripture has appropriated all Worship, antecedently to his Incarnation; and no Powers whatever committed to him, could give him so good a Title to Worship, as his being God and Creator. Nay, they can of themselves give no Title at all, because the Scripture Rule is, to worship God, the Creator only.

and

and *Creator*, before his Incarnation. They here blend the *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme together, and confound themselves by so doing. They have been charged with their Inconsistency, and have nothing to say in Reply^m. They attempt not to clear up the Repugnancy of which they are accused, though they have been called upon to do it; but they pass all over in profound Silence, and content themselves with running from the Point, and endeavouring by Doubles and Evasions to keep it out of Sight.

Lastly, It is pretendedⁿ, that *The Worship of the Son in Scripture*, is never intimated to be founded on his metaphysical Nature, but it is there always ascribed to him, as being Mediator; and ascribed not as ultimate, but as tending finally to the Glory of God the Father.

But it is certain on the contrary, that the Worship of the Son in Scripture is *always intimated* to be founded on his Divine Nature. For all the Precepts and Examples of worshipping him uniformly intimate that

^m See Dr. *Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 406, 412. The Author of the *Observations*, touches not on this Point, tho' he does on some others relating to the same Subject. He takes Notice of Dr. *Waterland's* Replies to the Pretences for the inferior Worship of Christ; and all the Answer he gives them, is, here a grave Sentence, and there, an abusive Repartee. See *Farther Vindication*, p. 77.

ⁿ Reply to Dr. *Waterland's Defence*, p. 364.

he is *truly God*, because the Scripture *uniformly* declares, that God *alone* is to be worshipped.

Indeed, the Reason *sometimes* given for worshipping him, is drawn from what he hath done in our behalf. It is said, for Instance, that *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Honour and Glory*^o; and we read, that *Dominion and Glory are ascribed to him for having loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood*^p. But in like manner, the Reason *sometimes* given for worshipping God the *Father*, is taken from the Benefits he bestows upon us. It is said, for Instance, *Unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, be Glory*^q: And we read, that *Salvation, and Glory, and Honour are ascribed to him, because his Judgments are righteous and true*^r. And therefore no Inference can hence be made against the Worship of the *Son*, but what equally affects the Worship of the *Father*.

But the Truth is, that in these and the like Texts, there is nothing at all said about the *Foundation* of Worship; but only the *Motives* to pay it are specified. When God the *Father* claims the Worship of Men (as

^o Rev. v. 9.

^p Rev. i. 5, 6.

^q Eph. iii. 20, 21.

^r Rev. xix. 1, 2.

he frequently does ^{r)} upon the Account of the great Things he hath done for them, he does not *found his Right* to their Worship upon these Acts of his Kindness, but he mentions them as Evidences of his Godhead, and as Arguments to awaken their Minds, and excite them to magnify him as they ought. So likewise, when the great and endearing Works of the *Son* of God, are assigned as the Reason for worshipping him, the Meaning is not that his Right to Worship is *founded* on these Works; but they are mentioned as Inducements to give him the *Honour* and *Glory* which are due to him [†]. And if we well consider the Springs by which *moral* Agents are actuated, we shall see the great Propriety and Expedience of this Proceeding. “ Abstracted Reasons of
 “ Esteem and Honour are unaffecting, without a Mixture of something relative to us,
 “ which our selves have a near Concern in.
 “ The *essential Dignity* of Christ’s Person is
 “ really the *Ground* and *Foundation* of Honour and Esteem (and consequently of
 “ *Worship* the highest Expression of both)
 “ which ought always to bear Proportion
 “ to the *intrinsic Excellency* of the Object.
 “ But his Offices *relative* to us are the

* Dr. Waterland’s Sermons, p. 176, 177.

† Dr. Waterland’s Second Defence, p. 382.

“ *moving*

“ *moving Reasons* which principally affect
 “ the Will, and without which we should
 “ want the strongest Incitement to pay
 “ that Honour and Worship, which the
 “ *essential Excellency* of his Person de-
 “ mands.”

Neither is it true, that *the Worship of the Son in Scripture* is ALWAYS ascribed to him as being Mediator.

There are indeed several Texts^a, in which we are taught, that as Christ is the Mediator between God and us, we should pray, and give Thanks to God through him; that is, these Texts of Scripture prescribe this manner of offering to God our religious Addresses. But yet the same Scripture teaches us in other Passages, that we should pray, and give Thanks DIRECTLY to Christ; not to the Father through him, but immediately to himself. So that Worship is not always ascribed to him as being Mediator, but sometimes, abstractedly from the Consideration of his Office; and he is worshiped in the same manner as the Father is^b; and therefore the offering up our Addresses to the Father through him, can be nothing more, than a particular Way of conveying them to both, founded

^a Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 277.

^b See the Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 361, 362.

^c Dr. Waterland says, “ Either the Son is not worshiped
 “ in this Case (to wit, when Prayers are offered through
 “ him)

founded in the *Distinction of their Order*, and in the *relative Character* which Christ bears to us. When we *pray*, or *give Thanks* to the Father *through* him, our Address is not made to the Father *exclusively of the Son*; but to the Father *directly*, as being *first in Order*, and to the Son by *Interpretation*, as being *equally God*. There is no *inferior* Worship paid to the Son; but the very same Prayers and Praises are offered to him *inclusively* with the Father, and conveyed *through him* to both, as the Mediator between God and us. In this Form of Worship, we consider the Son as *Mediator*; but we do not worship him *as such*. We do not *pray*, or *give Thanks* to him in this *Capacity*; though supposing that we do, yet, since he is a *Divine* Mediator, our Worship of him is not *subordinate* or *mediate* Worship, but *strictly Divine*. It is the Worship of a *Divine Person* under the Conception of his being our Mediator; and is therefore equally *Divine* with the Worship of the Father.

“ him) or he is worshiped: If he is not, there is no *mediate*
 “ Worship: If he is, then in worshipping the Father *through*
 “ him, his *Divinity*, and *Essential Union* with the Father
 “ (which alone can render our Services accepted, and unite
 “ us to God) are at the same Time acknowledged. And
 “ so the Worship of both is *one*, being an Acknowledgment
 “ of the same *Divine* Excellencies under a Distinction of
 “ *Persons* and *Offices*, &c. *Second Defence*, p. 393.

As

As to the last part of the Pretence, to wit, that *the Worship of Christ is always ascribed to him, not as ULTIMATE, but as tending finally to the Glory of God the Father*; the Answer is, that supposing this to be Fact, the Consequence will be, that Christ is *truly God*. Because if he were a *Creature*, the Worship of him could not *tend to the Glory of the Father*. It would be a Violation of his Law, and a Dishonour to him; and therefore its being represented to *tend to his Glory*, is a Proof that he is united with the Father in the *same Essence*. This Union it is, which makes their *Honour inseparable*, and their *Glory one*. The Worship of the *Son* redounds to the *Father*.

7 The most learned Bishop Bull observes, that the Worship of Christ, whether we consider him as *God-Man*, or Mediator between God and Man; or, whether we consider him as *God of God*, or *Son of God*, redounds to the *Glory of God the Father*. And why? Because his *Divinity* enters into each Consideration. It is the Worship of a *Divine Person*, a Person *naturally related* to the Father. Therefore if he were not so related, but a *Creature only*, his Worship could not tend to the Glory of the Father. Neither does the learned Prelate make *two Worships* of God the Son; *one*, as *God absolutely*; and *another*, as *Son of God*. But he plainly supposes it to be *one and the same*; that is, the Worship of the *same Divine Person*, under distinct Conceptions. This Passage has been misrepresented by the Author of the *Reply*, but Dr. Waterland has set it to rights in his *Second Defence*.

Bul. Def. Fid. Nic. Sect. 2. §. 15.

Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 383.

Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, p. 401.

as Fountain of the Deity, and *glorifies* him, as the *Son* is *glorified* by the Worship of the *Father*.

It is here observable of our Adversaries, that they suppose the Scripture to teach that the Worship of a *Creature* may tend to God's Glory. For the Son is with them no more than a *Creature*; and they plead, that the Scripture always ascribes Worship to him, as *tending to the Glory of God the Father*. But why will they charge the Scripture with so palpable an Absurdity? The Worship of a Creature is an Act which God absolutely forbids; and can the doing of such an Action tend to his Honour? It is transferring to a Creature the Homage he has reserved to himself, and setting up of a Creature as a Rival to him. And can this be for *his Glory*? Just as the Usurpation of the Royal Dignity contributes to *the Glory* of a Prince!

Neither is it possible for the Worship of a *Creature* to *terminate in God's Glory*, however we may *design* it so to do. The *worshiping* of any thing, is *making a God of it* in Scripture Stile. It is the placing of a *Creature* upon the *Level* with the Deity; and our *inward Intentions* cannot make such a *Debasement* of God to be a *Means of his Glory*. For which Reason we may conclude, that God never allowed Men to have

any *Mediums* of Worship, or to worship any *Creatures* with *Design* to glorify him.

And yet it is become a favourite Notion of the *Arians*², that the Sin of Idolaters lay only in *making Idol Mediators*, or such *Mediums*, as God did *not allow them to have*. But we find on the contrary, that God never permitted *any at all*.

“ To make any *Medium* of Worship, was
 “ to set up a *false God*, or an *idol God*; not
 “ a *false*, or *idol Mediator*. The Idolaters
 “ are never charged with mistaking the *Me-*
 “ *dium*, but mistaking the Object; not with
 “ having *false Mediators*, but *false Gods*;
 “ not for worshipping those who were not
 “ *Mediators by Office*, but those who *by Na-*
 “ *ture were no Gods*; for worshipping the
 “ *Creature*, not instead of the *Mediator*, but
 “ instead of the *Creator*, *who is blessed for*
 “ *ever*. Such is the constant Language both
 “ of the Old and New Testament, which
 “ never fix the Charge upon the setting up
 “ *false Mediators*, or *Mediums of Worship*;
 “ nor ever insert any Caution against it. So
 “ weak and groundless is the Notion of *idol*
 “ *Mediators* ! ”

² *Clark's Scripture Doctrine*, p. 344. 2d Edit.

Exposition of the Church Catechism, p. 25.

Emlyn of the Worship of Jesus Christ, p. 113.

³ *Dr. Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 374.

Besides, when Worship is offered to a *Medium* with Design to *terminate* it in God, what kind of Worship is paid to the *Medium*? Is it *Supreme*? No! For no Degree of *supreme* Worship, can, without *Idolatry*, be paid to a *Medium*. Is it *Inferior*? No! For no *inferior* Worship can, without *Blasphemy*, *terminate* in God: So that it is a Worship which is neither *supreme*, nor *inferior*. And who is the *Oedipus* that can unfold this Riddle of a Worship, and tell us what it is?

In short, as no *Creature* can be worshiped *mediately* to the *Glory of God*, so the Notion of *mediate Worship* is absurd and contradictory. For as it is *only* mediate, it must be *inferior*; and as it is *inferior*, it can't be *mediate*, because it can't pass on to the *supreme* Object. So that it is *mediate* Worship which is *ultimate*; or *mediate*, which is not *mediate*, but rests upon the Object to which it is offered; and by Consequence it is really a *Contradiction*.

Thus we see how vain the Pretences are, which have been thought of to elude the Argument for Christ's Divinity, which is drawn from his Worship. The End which they all drive at, is to make his Worship *different* from that of the Father, and *inferior* to it. But this being impossible, because Scripture knows but of *one Worship*,
and

and *one Foundation* of it, it follows that these Pretences are utterly insignificant, and that the Worship of Christ must be the *same* with the Father's, and founded upon the *same* Claim of true Divinity, and creative Power.

The *Arians* themselves seem at length to be sensible that their Pleas for *lessening* the Worship of Christ will not bear. For they ^b make no Reply to the Reasons urged in Confutation of them, and they are now for *not worshipping him at all*^c. But this Project will not do, any more than the other, being equally contrary to *Scripture* and *Antiquity*.

In short, the Argument from Worship is a true *Dilemma*; an *Argumentum Bicornem*; bearing on the *Arians* with irresistible Force, where-e'er they turn themselves for Security. If they admit that Christ is *to be worshiped*, the Consequence is unavoidable, that then he is *truly God*. If they will not admit it, they contradict the united Voice of Scripture and Antiquity, and are condemned by *both*.

But enough of this.

I proceed now to consider the last Argument of our Saviour's Divinity, which is,

^b Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 379, 393.

^c See the *Remarks on Dr. Clark's Exposition*, &c. p. 7.

198 S E R M O N VI.

that he is *included in the one true God*, who is declared to be the *only God*, besides *whom there is no other*.

Now, the several Arguments of his Divinity which have been considered before, are so many Proofs of his being included in the one true God. For since they assert his *essential* Deity, and Scripture plainly affirms, that there is but *one God, one true and adorable God*, they prove in Consequence, that he is included in the *one true God*, who is thus revealed to be more Persons than *one*.

If we suppose that the *one God*, is but one *Person* only, it will follow, that Scripture is inconsistent with itself, because it asserts the true Divinity of more Persons than *one*, in as plain and strong Terms as it does the Unity of God; and therefore its Declarations of the *Unity* cannot mean, that the *one God* is but *one Person*, but they mean, that there is but *one Divine Being, one true and adorable Deity*, to whom all our Religious Services are due; and that all *inferior* and *nominal* Deities are *no Gods*, to whom *no Worship* is to be paid; but *all Worship* must be offered to the *one Divine Being*, or the Persons revealed to subsist in it.

If we interpret the *one God* of the *Father* only, then the Father is the *alone Divine and adorable Person*, and Christ is not God in a
proper

proper Sense. He is no more truly God than the *Heathen Deities*, or than *Princes*, and *Magistrates*, who are sometimes called Gods in a metaphorical Sense; and *Worship* is no more payable to him than to any of these *nominal Gods*, but is equally forbidden as an Act of Idolatry. But certainly the Scripture, if there be any Truth or Sincerity in it, cannot teach this Doctrine. For it affirms the infinite Superiority of Christ to all Creatures: It proclaims his *Divine Dignity* in as illustrious a manner, as it does that of the *Father*: It ascribes to him the *distinguishing* Titles, the *incommunicable* Perfections, the *peculiar* Works, the *appropriate* Worship of the *one true God*. And can it mean nothing more by all this, than that he is a *nominal* God only, a *meer Creature*, and no more adorable than *reputed* and *fictitious* Deities? Impossible! and therefore the supposing it to assert, that *the one God is the Father only*, is grossly abusing it.

But it is pleaded for the avoiding of this Difficulty, that its meaning in relation to the *Divine Unity* is, that there is but one *supreme* God, to wit, the *Father*; and that it does not exclude the Son from being *God*, or God in a *far higher Sense* than any *nominal* Deity; but only from being the *supreme* God, or God in the *same Sense* with the *Father*. But it is certain that the Scripture

does not say, and therefore should *not be supposed to mean*, that there is but one *supreme* God, and no other *Supreme*; but it says absolutely, there is but *one God*, and no *other God*. The Word *Supreme* is an arbitrary Addition to the Texts concerning the *Divine Unity*, and, like most arbitrary Things, it is reclaimed against by common Sense and Reason. For if the meaning of these Texts were only this, that there is but *one supreme* God, *one only* who is *supreme*, it is evident, that they would not forbid the Acknowledgment and Worship of *inferior* Gods^d. Because as they declared only against a *Plurality* of *supreme* Deities, they would not prohibit those who are not *supreme*, or not considered as such; nor therefore disallow us to have *other* Gods besides the *one true God*, or to worship *Baal*, and *Astaroth*, and the *other Gods of the Heathens*; that is, they would be directly contrary to the *first Command*, and to *all the Laws* about *idolatrous* Worship; and therefore they can't admit of this Interpretation. So that the Meaning of them is, that there is but *one God*, *one adorable* God; and consequently, if they are understood of the *Father*, they entirely exclude

^d See Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, p. 4. in which he gives three unanswerable Reasons, why the Texts which declare there is but *one God*, cannot be supposed to mean, *one supreme God*.

Christ from being *truly God*, or the *Object of Worship*, and reduce him to the Class of *nominal* and *fictitious* Deities. But since Scripture asserts his *essential Godhead* in the fullest Terms, and is most certainly consistent with itself, it follows, that these Texts cannot be understood of the *Father only*, but of the Son together with him ^e.

The Texts which have been particularly cited in proof of his being the *same God* with the Father, declare him to be God ^f.—*God before the Creation*^g:—*Over all, God blessed for ever*^h:—*Subsisting in the Form of God before he became Man*ⁱ:—*The Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*^k. Clear and lively Assertions

* The Holy Ghost also, whose *essential Godhead* is asserted, being *ever included*. The *one God* means the Father, with the Son, and Spirit, who are all inseparably united in the *same Essence*.

^f Heb. i. 8.

^g Joh. i. 1.

^h Rom. ix. 5.

ⁱ Phil. ii. 6.

^k Heb. i. 3.

N. B. These Texts which were urged by Dr. Waterland in his *First Defence*, have been unanswerably vindicated in his *Second*, against all the Exceptions of the Author of the *Reply*. This Gentleman ventures to assert, without one Syllable of Proof, that the Texts are directly against Dr. Waterland. The only Ground he goes upon is *his own Presumption*, that they prove Christ to be *the very Father*, if they prove him the *same God*. Christ, says he, cannot be THAT SUPREME GOD which the Father is; that is, he cannot be *that supreme Person*, which is supposing that the *supreme God* is but *one Person*, to wit, *the Father*; and inferring from that Supposition, which is a *Petitio Principii*, that Christ must be the *Father*, if he be the *supreme God*. See Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 42.

of

of his *true Divinity*, and bearing with such Force upon the Opposers of it, that they have nothing to reply to them, but *a poor begging of the Question*; to wit, that Christ cannot be the *same God*, without being the *same Person*, with the Father.

The Texts which have been referred to in farther Proof of the same Doctrine declare, that the *Father* and *Son* are *one*¹: That, the Son is *in the Father*, and the Father *in him*^m: That, he who hath *seen the one*, hath therein *seen the other* alsoⁿ: That, the Son is in the *Bosom* of the Father, and as *intimate* to him as *Thought* to the *Mind*^o: That, *All Things which the Father hath are the Son's*; and that, *Whatsoever the Father doth, the Son doth likewise*^p: That, they are *one Temple*^q, and have *one Throne*^r, and make *one Light*^s. What plainer or stronger Proofs can be had, that they are both *one God*, or that Christ is included with the Father in the *one God*?

I must farther observe, that it has been evinced^t with great Learning and Judgment,

¹ Joh. x. 30.

^m x. 38. xiv. 10, 11.

ⁿ xiv. 9.

^o i. 18. Dr. Waterland's *Sermons*, p. 5.

^p xvi. 15. v. 19.

^q Rev. xxi. 22.

^r xxii. 1.

^s xxi. 23.

^t By Dr. Knight in his very judicious and excellent *Sermons*.
and

and no Pretence of a Solution has been offered, that a great many Texts of the Old Testament, in which the *Lord Jehovah, the supreme God, the one eternal and necessary Being, whom the Jews worshiped*, is spoken of, are applied by the Writers of the New Testament to the *Son of God*. The Consequence of which is, that Christ the *Son of God*, is the *Lord Jehovah, the supreme God, the God of Israel*, or included together with the Father in the *one true God*.

Nor must I omit to take Notice, that this Doctrine is most plainly asserted by the *Ante-Nicene* Writers, as appears by the following Considerations^u.

First, Some of them declare *expressly* (as *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* for Instance) and others by *necessary Consequence*, that the Texts which affirm the *Unity of God*, do not ex-

^u N. B. These several Particulars are abundantly proved by Dr. *Waterland* in his *Second Defence*, under *Query the Second*. And I thought proper to recite them, as they are of especial Importance to manifest the true Sense of the Fathers, and shew that they could not have the same Notions with the *Arians*, unless they were the most inconsistent Men that ever breath'd. If we add to these Particulars of their Doctrine, those other Heads of it, which are specified in his *Farther Vindication of Christ's Divinity, Chapter the Fifth*, it will then fully appear, that what he said to the Author of the *Reply* is certainly true. *The Fathers stand pointed against you, and you are certain to expose your Cause, as often as you hope for any Relief or Succour from them.* Second Defence, p. 169.

clude the Son from being *God*. They asserted the Father and Son *together* to be the *one God*.

Secondly, They constantly teach the *Unity of God*. They protest against admitting *another God* besides the *one God*. They declare the Son not to be *another God*. And *Origen* in Answer to the Charge (retorted upon him by *Celsus*) of worshiping *another God* besides the *one Supreme*, denies that they worshiped *another*, for that the Father and Son are *one God*. He did not say, that the Son was a *subordinate* God, and therefore not *another* : For then *Celsus* might have replied, that by the same Rule, neither were the Deities of the Heathens *other* Gods, nor were they chargeable with *Polytheism* any more than Christians : But he asserted Father and Son to be *one God* ; which took off from the *Christians* the Accusation of having *more Gods than one*, and left it upon the *Heathens* who admitted *inferior* Deities *separate from the Supreme* ².

Thirdly, They constantly taught, that Father and Son were *one God*, or *the same God*. This has been proved with respect to *every Writer* ; and the Exceptions advanced to weaken the Evidence, have been considered and refuted ¹.

² *Second Defence*, p. 69.

¹ *Second Defence* from p. 71, to p. 127.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, They applied to the *Son* many Texts of the Old Testament, which undoubtedly belong to *the one God supreme*. They applied them to him considered in his *own Person*, and as being *really himself the true God*. They declared him to be in his *own Person*, the *Jehovah*, the *Lord God*, the *God of Abraham*, and the like.

What then can be more evident, than that they affirmed the Father and Son to be the *one God*, and the *same God*? And if so, how can it be pretended, that they excluded the Son from the *one God*, or taught that he was *another God*, or God in a *subordinate Sense*? And yet our modern *Arians* lay Claim to them as favouring their Scheme.

And in order to support this Claim, they pick some Passages out of their Writings, to *confront* with their clearer Testimonies, and then argue from the *one*, in *Opposition to the other*; that is, *they strive to make the Fathers contradict themselves*; and when they think they have done so, they triumph in the Achievement, and boast of the Fathers with great Alacrity. But how ridiculous are these *Airs*? For if the *Fathers* are inconsistent, there is but little Reason to boast of them. They are *Neuters* in the Cause, and their Authority is of no Weight at all.

But it is pleaded after all ^z, that the Son cannot be *included* in the *one* God, because the *Father* is stiled the *one*, and the *only* God in *Contradistinction* to the Son; and when *one Person* is in any respect declared to be the *only*,

^z *Reply* to Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, p. 27.

The Texts appealed to in Proof of this, are *John* xvii. 3. *Eph.* iv. 6. 1 *Cor.* viii. 6.

As to the *first Text* (*Joh.* xvii. 3.) the Father is stiled the *only true* God: But no Body ever thought, besides the *Arians*, that he was so called in *Opposition* to the Son, or *exclusive* of him. All the Ancients thought, that he was called so in *Opposition* to *Idols* only; and they insist upon this Reason, why it could not be in *Opposition* to the Son, because the Son is asserted to be *true God* as well as the Father.

See the *True Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 9. and *Cont.* p. 36, &c.

See also Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 56.

As to the *second Text* (*Eph.* iv. 6.) in which the Father is stiled, the *one God and Father of all*; it is certain, that it was generally understood by the Ancients of the *whole Trinity*. To which the *Author of the Reply* objects, that this can't be, because the Father is distinguished in the very same Sentence from the *one Lord*, and *one Spirit*; and where he is distinguished from the *other two Persons*, he could not be thought by the *Ancients*, to be *all Three*. *Reply*, p. 39. But it has been proved, that they did understand the Text of the *Trinity*: That, *Irenæus*, *Hippolytus*, *Athanasius* and *Jerom* did so understand it. They thought that it declared the *one God* to be the *Father*, including in him the *Word* and *Spirit*; and to be *above all* as Father: *through all*, by the *Word*; and, *in all*, by the *Spirit*. They considered the *Father*, sometimes in a *restrained* Sense, as denoting his *own Person only*; and sometimes in a *larger* Sense, as containing the *other two Persons*. And there is no Absurdity in this, nothing being more common than to understand the Head of a Family, suppose *Abraham*, either as denoting his own *proper Person*, or as denoting *himself*, and *all his Descendents*, considered

only, he must needs be so exclusively of all others in that Sense, wherein he is declared to be the only; otherwise there is no Certainty or Use in Language.

But

considered as contained in him, and reckoned to him. See Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 60. and *True Scripture Doctrines Continued*, p. 67, and 103.

As to the *third Text* (1 Cor. viii. 6.) in which it is said, that, *To us there is but one God the Father*, it has been proved to a Demonstration, that it does not exclude the Son from being God. Indeed the *Arians* place their main Strength in this Text, and perpetually refer to it, as if it were decisive in their Favour, and the whole Scripture must yield to its Determination. The *Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence*, drawn up by the *Arian Party*, and containing their whole Strength, has continual Recourse to this Text; and it confidently avers in one Place, that it excludes the Son in the most express Words, p. 29. But this is an evident Falsity, as will appear by a little Consideration of the Text. We know that an Idol is nothing, and that there is none other God but one, for though there be that are called Gods, whether in Heaven, or in Earth, as there be Gods many, and Lords many, yet to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all Things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all Things; that is, there is indeed but one true God; for though there be many nominal Gods among the Heathens, Gods of several Classes celestial and terrestrial, yet we Christians have but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of the many Deities among the Heathens, the many Gods, and many Lords which they had, we have but one God, to wit, the Father; and one Lord, to wit, Jesus Christ. But the Father is not the one God exclusively of Christ, any more than Christ is the one Lord, exclusively of the Father. For Christ is as much opposed to the nominal Deities of the Heathens as the Father is; as much opposed to their many Lords, as the Father is, to their many Gods; and therefore he can no more be a nominal Deity than the Father is; nor consequently excluded from the one true God, any more than the Father from the one true Lord; and if not, then the Father cannot be

But to this I answer first,

Though the *Father* be stiled the *only* God, and that, in *Contradistinction* to the *Son*, yet he is not so called in respect of his *Godhead*, or, as importing, that *he alone is God*: Because in *this respect*, there can be no *Contradistinction* between the *Father* and the *Son*, since the *Son* is as *truly God* as the *Father*. But he is stiled the *only* God, in respect of his *manner of subsisting in the Deity*; in which there is a *Distinction* between him and the *Son*, and he alone is God, *subsisting in that manner*. If no Reason could be given for calling him the *only* God, without supposing that the *Son* is *excluded* from being *God*, the Application of this Character to him, might exclude the *Son*. But there is a very plain and just Reason assignable for stiling him the

be the *one God* exclusively of him. The *Father* and the *Son* are *equally distinguished* from the *fictional* Deities of the *Pagans*, some of whom were called *Gods*, and some, *Lords*; the *Father*, under the Title of the *one God*; and the *Son*, under that of the *one Lord*; and therefore the Title of the *one God*, under which the *Father* is *distinguished* from the *Pagan* Deities, does not exclude the *Son* from being *true God*, nor the Title of *one Lord*, by which the *Son* is *distinguished* from them, exclude the *Father* from being *true Lord*. If it did, then neither *the Son* nor *the Father* would be *truly God*, but they would *both* be *excluded* from true Deity, and ranked among the Number of the *Gods many*, and the *Lords many*; which is infinitely absurd to suppose.

See Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 55. *First Defence*, p. 8. *True Scripture Doctrine*, p. 14. and *Continued*, p. 44. and 64.

only

only God, without affecting the *Deity of the Son*. He may be so called, as he is the *first Person* in the Godhead; the *Head* and *Fountain* of the other two; having a *Priority of Order*, and *superior Manner of Existence*; in which respect he is *primarily* and *emphatically* God. But when in *this Sense* he is called the *only God*, it is evident, that the Son is not *excluded from being God*. He is only excluded from that *Priority of Order*, that *eminent Manner of Existing*, which is peculiar to the Father; that is, he is *only excluded from being the Father*.

Secondly, I answer: We cannot infer from the *Father's* being stiled the *only God*, that he *must needs be God exclusively of the Son*, because by this Inference, we make Scripture inconsistent with itself, since it asserts as clearly, and proclaims as magnificently the *Deity of the Son*, as it does that of the Father; and therefore we must distinguish upon the *Sense*, in which it stiles the Father the *only God*. If we suppose it to be in this Sense, that *he alone has the Divine Nature*, we charge it with Repugnancy, because it attributes the *Divine Nature* to the Son. But if we suppose it to give the Father this Title, as being the *First Person* of the Deity, and *Prior in Order* to the Son, we then preserve its Harmony throughout; because it teaches the Son's *real Divinity*,

and his *Subordination* to the Father : And therefore this is the only Sense, which can be admitted. Consequently, the Character of *only God*, given to the Father, does not *exclude the Son from being God*.

Thirdly, I answer ; That if we interpret the exclusive Term *only* with the utmost Rigour, and infer from it, that the Father is God *exclusively* of the Son, we shall be led by this Interpretation into many senseless Conclusions, and shall destroy the Deity of the Father which we intend to establish. For if the Father be God *exclusively* of the Son *for this Reason*, because he is stiled the *only God*, then the Son, for the *same Reason*, is God *exclusively* of the Father, because he also is stiled the *only God*^a. If there be such Force in the Term *only*, as to exclude the Son from *being God*, it will equally exclude the Father from having the *same Knowledge* with the Son. For we read, that the Son *ONLY knoweth the Father*^b ; and that, *he had a Name written which he ONLY knew himself*^c : And if it excludes the Father from *knowing what the Son does*, it excludes him from *Omniscience*, and consequently from the

^a Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 56. and *Sermons*, p. 141. *True Scripture Doctrine*, p. 9. and *Continued*, p. 36.

In which Places it is proved, that both the Scripture and Fathers give the Appellation of *only God* to the Son.

^b Mat. xi. 27.

^c Rev. xix. 12.

Deity.

Deity. And therefore as such Stress cannot justly be laid upon it, so I would observe farther, that to infer from it the *alone Deity* of the Father, is an express Contradiction.

For thus the Case stands. The Term *only*, if interpreted with the utmost Rigour, proves the Father to be *ignorant of what is known to the Son*, and therefore not *truly God*, since infinite Knowledge is an essential Property of the Deity. If therefore you suppose this Term to prove him the *only God*, you infer the Limitation of the Godhead to him from a Medium which destroys his Divinity. You conclude him to *be the only God*, for this Reason, because *he is no God*. You ascribe to him the Divine Nature *exclusively* of the Son, upon a Foundation, which ascribes to the Son the Property of that Nature *exclusively* of him. Such is the curious Reasoning of our *New Masters in Divinity!*

Thus I have finished the Arguments which have been principally urged in proof of the Son's *true Divinity*, and should proceed to mention those, which the *Arians* have advanced on their Side of the Question. But this must be reserved for the next Opportunity.

SERMON VII.

ROMANS ix. *ver.* 5.

*Of whom as concerning the Flesh
Christ came, who is over all, God
blessed for ever. Amen.*

THE Business which I am first to enter upon at present, is to mention the Arguments which have been used by the *Arians* in proof of the Son's *natural Inferiority* to the Father, and to shew that they have been thoroughly baffled and confuted.

Now these Arguments are taken, First, From *Scripture*. Secondly, From the *Fathers*. And Thirdly, From the *Nature and Reason of the Thing*. They are the very same which our Adversaries urge to invalidate

date the Proofs of the Son's *natural Deity*, or, of his being *included with the Father in the one true God*; and their Vanity with respect to *Scripture*, and the *Fathers*, was demonstrated in the last Discourse, where this Subject was considered.

First, for Instance; As to the Arguments from *Scripture*; it was proved, in Confutation of them, that the *Divine Unity* which Scripture teaches is not an *Unity of Person*, and that it cannot assert the Father to be the *only God exclusively* of the Son, without plainly contradicting itself, and forfeiting all Claim to either *Sense*, or *Sincerity*; and that therefore the imputing of such Doctrine to it, is little better than a *prophane Abuse* of it.

Secondly, As to the Arguments from the *Fathers*; it was proved, that they could not, for several Reasons, teach the Son's *natural Inferiority* to the Father, or his Exclusion from the *one true God*; and that our Adversaries, in Support of their Claim to them, endeavour at nothing more than to *make them contradict themselves*. They insist upon some Passages of each Writer, directly contrary, as they understand them, to other Passages of the same Writer: And they never attempt to reconcile them, or to make

the Author consistent with himself; but they only labour to confront his Testimonies against them, by others which they take to be for them: And, on this Foundation, they lay claim to his Authority; though it is evident, that they have only set him at Variance with himself; which is making him a Person of no Authority at all.

I would now observe 2dly, of our Adversaries, that they fix their own *novel* and *heretical* Sense, upon some Principles held by the Ancients^a; such as, *the Supremacy of the Father*, and, *the Subordination of the Son*; and then affirm, that the Ancients held them in that Sense, to which they strain and pervert them. The *Supremacy of the Father*, and, *the Subordination of the Son*, are inconsistent, in their Sense, with an *Equality of Nature* common to both: And hereupon they pretend, that the *Ancients* understood them in the *same Sense*, and held the *Father's* Superiority to the *Son* in *Nature* and *Dominion*. Whereas it is Demonstration, that they taught no other *Supremacy* of the Father, or *Subordination* of the Son, but what they thought consistent with their having the *same Nature* or *Godhead*.

Thirdly, They are guilty of all sorts of Artifices and Frauds to disguise and suppress

^a See Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 510, 515.

the true Sense of the Authors whom they cite, and to hinder the Reader from perceiving it. They *curtail* and *mangle* some Passages. They *transpose* the Words ; and *change the very Words themselves*, in others. They mis-report, mis-quote, mis-translate ; and in short, use every Method of *Unrighteousness* and *Deceit*, in their Appeal to the *Ancients*.

Fourthly, They have recourse, like the *Papists*, to many *spurious* Writings, and avouch their *Genuineness* and *Authority* : And at the same Time they reject others as *illegitimate*, which are allowed by the *best Critics* to be *genuine* ; and against which no *reasonable*, or *sufficient* Objections can be made ^b.

These are the Expedients which our Adversaries have submitted to use, in order to give some Colour to their Pretence, that the *Ancients* taught the *natural Inferiority* or *Subjection* of the *Son* to the *Father*. Neither could they have given it the least Air of Probability, but by such *iniquitous Proceedings*. Because it is most evident, that the *Ancients* could teach no such Doctrine,

^b N.B. Several Proofs of all these Instances of unfair Dealing, with respect to the *Ancients*, are brought by Dr. *Waterland* in his *First* and *Second Defence*, under *Query* the 27th ; and in his *Farther Vindication*, Chap. 4.

because they held several, which are diametrically opposite to it. Their Writings have been examined of late with the utmost Accuracy; and it appears upon this Examination, that they all of them for the three first Centuries, taught such Doctrines, as are utterly inconsistent with the Son's *natural Inferiority* to the Father.

They taught ^c, for Instance, the *Con-substantiality*, the *Co-eternity*, and *necessary Existence* of God the Son. They ascribed to him the Titles and Attributes *peculiar* to the *God of Israel*, *God supreme*. They declared for the *Worship* of the Son, while they protested against the *Worship* of any Being, but the *one true God*. So that they most fully asserted the Son's *Equality* with the Father, in *Nature* and *all Perfections*; and they could not possibly have *any Appearance* of favouring the *Arian Scheme*, but by being *misrepresented* and *abus'd*.

I proceed now 3dly, to consider the Arguments drawn from the *Nature and Reason*

^c See Dr. Waterland's fifth Chapter of his *Farther Vindication*, where he has mentioned the ancient Writers in a *Chronological Order*, and referred to plain Passages out of each of them; out of *Ignatius*, *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus*, *Irenæus*, *Clement of Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, *Hippolytus*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, *Novatian*, &c.; in which they assert the *Consubstantiality*, *Co-eternity*, and *necessary Existence* of God the Son; and consequently, his *natural Co-equality* with the Father in *Godhead* and *all Perfections*.

of the Thing, against the Son's *natural* Deity, or his being included with the Father in the *one true God*.

Now these are various, being teem'd from the fruitful Womb of roving Invention.

First for Instance, our Adversaries^d argue, that *Person* and *Being* are Terms equivalent. Every Person is a *distinct intelligent Being*, or *acting Substance*; and therefore, as the Father and the Son are *two Persons*, they cannot be *one Divine Being*, or *God*; but they must be *two distinct Beings*, or *Substances*, that is, *two Gods*.

Secondly, They^e argue, that *two distinct Persons*, each of which is *intelligent* and *acting Substance*, cannot be *one singular identical Substance*, by any *Union* or *Inseparability* whatever; because their *distinct Intelligence*, and *active Power* will render them *more Substances*, or *more Gods than one*, how-

^d See Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, under *Query* the 22d, which is this; whether the whole Performance of Dr. Clark, whenever he differs from us, be any Thing more than a Repetition of this Assertion, that *Being* and *Person* are the same, or that there is no *Medium* between *Tritheism* and *Sabellianism*?

See the *Reply* to his *Defence*, p. 418; and *Second Defence* under the same *Query*; and Dr. Bishop's *Sermons*, p. 250.

^e *Reply* to Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, p. 24, 25, 308, 420, 489. In Confutation of which see Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 64, 65, 201, 202, 207, 324, 447.

Dr. Bishop's *Sermons*, 253.

ever

ever otherwise *united*, or *inseparable* the Substance be.

Thirdly, They ^f argue, that the *Father* and the *Son* cannot be included in the *same Deity*, because then they would be *one God* in *Kind*, and in *Number* too, which is impossible: One in *Kind*, as being *each of them* truly God; and one in *Number*, as being but *one God*, and *no more*. But their being *one in Kind*, supposes them to be *two in Number*; and is therefore inconsistent with their being *numerically one*.

Fourthly, They ^g argue, that *Person* and *Substance* being the *same Thing*, it follows that if the *Father* and *Son* are made *one Substance* by vertue of their *Union*, they must be also *one Person*.

Fifthly, They ^h argue, that the *Son* cannot be the *same God* with the *Father*, because the *Father* is *Self-existent*, which the

^f *Remarks on Dr. Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 25.

See *Dr. Waterland's Farther Vindication*, p. 80.

And *Animadversions on the Remarks*, p. 20.

^g *Remarks on Dr. Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 36.

See *Animadversions on these Remarks*, p. 19.

And, *Farther Vindication*, p. 21.

^h *Dr. Clark's Scripture Doctrine*.

Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 253.

Remarks on his Second Defence, p. 33.

See *Dr. Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 217, 218, 254, 310, 428.

Dr. Bishop's Sermons, p. 255, &c. 266.

Animadversions on the Remarks, p. 27, 38, 49.

SERMON VII. 219

Son is not; and *Self-existence* is the *supreme Perfection* of the Deity. The *Essence* of the Son is *derived*, and cannot be the *same* with *underived* *Essence*, but *distinct* from, and *inferior* to it.

Sixthly, They argue likewise from the *Subordination* and *Generation* of the Son, that he must be of a *different* Nature from the *Father*. The ⁱ *Subordination* must be in *Authority* and *Dominion*; or else it is only in *meer Order* and *Position* of Words; and amounts in reality to a *Co-ordination*: And *Generation* implies a *Priority* of Existence in the *Father*, and an *Act* of his *Will* in producing the *Son*: Otherwise the *Father* is no more the *Cause* of his Existence, than he is of the Existence of his Attributes; and then *Generation* is only an extravagant *Figure of Speech*, and *Abuse of Language*.

These, and such as these, are the *metaphysical Reasonings* which our Adversaries have urged in Opposition to the *Catholick Doctrine*; and from which they conclude, that the *Father* and *Son* cannot be *one God*; or that the *Son* cannot be the *same God*, or

ⁱ Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 83, 251.

Remarks on Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, p. 42.

Observations on the same, p. 32.

See Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, p. 96.

And Farther Vindication, p. 42.

Dr. Bishop's Sermons, p. 260.

Animadversions on the Remarks, p. 39, 40.

God in the *same Sense* with the *Father*. They have all of them been particularly considered and refuted ^k. I cannot stay to mention the Replies which have been respectively made in Confutation of them: But I shall insist on one Observation, which proves that they can have *no Weight* or *Force* in them at all; to wit, that they are drawn from *the Nature of the Thing*, which is *infinitely above our Comprehension*.

We have in Scripture as *clear* and *full* Evidences of the *Divinity* of the *Son*, as we have of the *Divinity* of the *Father*. All the *Tokens*, and *Ensigns*, and *Characters* of true *Deity* are ascribed to him.

Jehovah, for Instance, is the *incommunicable Name*, the *appropriate Character* of the one *true God*, denoting his *necessary*, *unchangeable* Existence, by which he is *distinguished* from all other Beings. But the *Son* is declared to be *Jehovah* as well as the *Father*; *Jehovah* in his own *Person*.

Immutable Eternity, *Almighty Power*, *infinite Knowledge*, *Presence in all Places*, are the *peculiar Perfections* of God *alone*: Perfections which it is absolutely impossible for any *Creature* to have. But the *Son* is declared to be vested with *these Perfections* as well as the *Father*.

^k As will fully appear, by consulting the Books I have referred to, in which *these Arguments* are severally considered and refuted.

Religious Worship is appropriated *absolutely* to God *alone*. No Angel, nor Arch-Angel; no *Creature* in the Universe, how excellent soever it be supposed, is to be *worshipped*. But the same Scripture which thus protests against the *Worship* of any Being but God *alone*, enjoins the *Adoration* of the *Son* as well as of the *Father*: Therefore the Scripture does as fully declare the *Deity* of the *Son* as it does that of the *Father*.

What can be plainer than this Conclusion? And to confirm it the more, we find that the *universal Church* has all along acknowledged it, and formed its *Belief* and *Profession* upon it.

Now the *Arians* demur to this Conclusion, clear and demonstrative as it is, upon the Ground of their *Philosophy*. Their *Philosophy* teaches them, that the *one Divine Being* cannot be *more Persons than one*; and that the *Son*, a *derivative* and *subordinate* Being cannot be the *same God* with the *Father*; and what their *Philosophy* teaches them, *must be true*. They oppose its Instruction to the plainest Evidences of the contrary Doctrine, and think it of sufficient Weight to overbear them.

And yet their *Philosophy* in this Case is nothing more than a *Dream*, because built upon *intrinsic Evidence*, of which they have none. It is impossible for us to know

by our Reason alone, whether the *one* God be *one* Person, or more; impossible to tell with any Certainty, whether *Sonship* be consistent with *Sameness* of Nature. For ¹ *can we by searching find out God, can we find out the Almighty to Perfection?* No! for *behold God is great, and we know him not; touching the Almighty we cannot find him out.* And for this Reason we cannot pretend to argue from the Divine Nature *abstractedly considered*; or to conclude any Thing about the *Manner* of its Subsistence. Every Argument of this kind is but a *blind Conjecture*; or saying *we know not what*, and concluding *we know not why*. If we keep to the *Light of Scripture*, intended chiefly to instruct us in the *Nature of God*, we can come at *certain and safe Resolutions* concerning it. But if we trust to *meer Reason*, we wander into the Dark, and can no more resolve with *Certainty*, or advance beyond *Visions of the Fancy*, than we can take up the Ocean in our Hands, or see at one View the Objects dispersed through the whole Creation. Were we as able to judge of the *Modus* of the *Divine Existence*, as we are of those Things which are level to our Understanding, there might be some Force in the Objections drawn from *Reason* against the *Godhead* of

¹ Job xxxvii. 23.

the Son: But since the *Divine Nature* is incomprehensible, and there may be a *Plurality* of Persons in it; though we cannot conceive how; there can be nothing more in our philosophical Reasonings against such *Plurality*, than there is in the *Demonstrations* which a blind Man may form against *Light* and *Colours*.

Some of the ancient *Arians* were well apprized of this Point. They saw that all the Arguments against the *Trinity* drawn from the *Nature of the Thing*, could be of no Force, but upon this Supposition, that the *Divine Essence* was comprehensible; and therefore they affirmed that it was so. They found it necessary for the Support of their Cause, to abet this Opinion, however extravagant: And some of our *English Socinians*, being sensible of the same Thing, have followed their Example, declaring the *Divine Nature* to be no more *mysterious* than that of the *Creatures*. The same Notion must our *modern Arians* retreat to, or else give up their Philosophy, as meer Impertinence and Vanity. For to argue from the Nature of a Thing is palpable Nonsense, unless the Nature of the Thing be understood.

Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 307.

And

And yet, *vain and ridiculous* as their *Philosophy* is, it is their *great, and beloved Idol*; the *Idol* to which *Scripture* and *Antiquity* must bow; and which they set up as the *Standard of all Truth*. They have recourse to it upon all Occasions: They consult it in all Emergencies: They are determined by its *oracular Dictates*, and they can hardly take one Step without the Help of it. Sometimes indeed they pretend to disclaim it; and to be willing to put the Merits of the Cause upon *Scripture* and *Antiquity*. But every Man knows who has but dipped into the Controversy, that they place it upon the Foot of *natural Reason*, and reduce it to a few *metaphysical Questions*, about *Supremacy* and *Self-existence: Individual Substance*, and *identical Life; derived, and underived: Ne-*

^a Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 300, 323.

Second Defence, p. 4, 331, 425, 434, 484, 520.

^c Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 311.

^p Dr. Waterland in his *Second Defence*, says thus. "As to the Charge I made (p. 484.) relating to your resting your Cause, in the last Result, solely upon *Metaphysicks*, though you are pleased to call it *Calumny*, there is not a Syllable of it but what is strictly true, and may be undeniably proved from Dr. Clark's own Pieces, and yours.— I still continue to affirm, having proved it more than once, that in the last Result your Doctrine stands upon *Metaphysicks* only.— They are what you constantly retreat to, when press'd: And without them you cannot advance one considerable Step towards what you aim at, with all your pretended Proofs from *Scripture* or *Antiquity*, p. 520.

*cessary Generation, and Subordination of Office: Causes and no Causes: Acts and no Acts, and the like. They have openly declared with respect to their metaphysical Arguments, that unless they are answered, all other Things are to no Purpose*¹. And upon this it has been justly observed, that “*Their Conduct in this Controversy is unaccountable*”. For “they plainly lay the Stress of the Question upon *Metaphysics*, and yet appeal to *Scripture and Fathers*, as if it lay there. If they really think that the received Doctrine of the *Trinity* is *absurd in itself*, and therefore *impossible to be proved*, why should they amuse us with *Scripture and Fathers*, as if they were of Moment in the Case. They should rather have wrote a *philosophical Dissertation* to shew, that the Notion itself is contradictory, and such as no *Scripture*, or *Fathers*, can prove. This is their real Meaning,” and what they have oftentimes freely declared. “But as the first Question always is, whether a Thing be *possible*; and next whether it be *true*, they should have begun with the Point of the *Possibility*, without meddling at all with *Scripture and Fathers*; which are impertinently brought in, while the Que-

¹ Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 25.

² Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, p. 63.

Q

“ stion

“tion of the *Possibility* remains in Suspense.”

It is observable farther, that whilst they play their *Metaphysicks* against the *Catholick Doctrine*, and chiefly rely upon them, they artfully complain of *philosophical Arguments*, and *scholastick Distinctions*, and lay their own *Sin at the Door of their Adversaries*, who never had recourse to *Metaphysicks*, but in their own necessary Defence^f. It is certain^g that “the Faith of the Church was at first, “and might be still, a *plain, easy* Thing, did “not its Adversaries endeavour to perplex “and puzzle it with *philosophical Niceties*, “and minute Enquiries into the *Modus*, of “what they cannot comprehend. The first “Christians easily believed that *Father, Son,* “and *Holy Ghost*, into whom they were *baptized*, and whom they *worshipped* were “equally *Divine*, without troubling themselves about the *Manner* of it, or the reconciling it with their Belief in one God. “As Men generally believe that God *fore-knows* every Thing, and that Man notwithstanding is a *free Agent*, and scarce “one perhaps in a Thousand concerns himself how to reconcile these two Positions,

^f See Dr. *Waterland's Defence*, p. 300.

Second Defence, p. 4.

^g These are the excellent Words of Dr. *Waterland* in his *Defence*, p. 300.

“ or

" or is at all apprehensive of any Difficulty
 " in it. This seems to have been the art-
 " less Simplicity of the *primitive Christians*,
 " till prying and pretending Men came to
 " start Difficulties, and raise Scruples, and
 " make Disturbance; and then it was ne-
 " cessary to guard the Faith of the Church
 " against such Cavils and Impertinencies as
 " began to threaten it. *Philosophy* and *Me-*
 " *taphysicks* were called in to its Assistance;
 " but not till Hereticks had shewn the Way,
 " and made it in a Manner necessary for the
 " *Catholicks* to encounter them with their
 " own Weapons. Some new Terms, and
 " particular Explications came in by this
 " Means; that such as had a Mind to cor-
 " rupt or destroy the Faith might be de-
 " feated in their Purposes. It was needless
 " to say that Generation was *without Divi-*
 " *sion*, while no Body suspected or thought
 " of any *Division* in the Case: But after
 " *Hereticks* had invidiously represented the
 " *Catholicks* as asserting a *Division*, it was
 " high Time for the *Catholicks* to resent the
 " Injury, and deny the Charge. There was
 " no Occasion for the mentioning of three
 " *Hypostases*, till such as *Praxeas*, *Noetus*,
 " and *Sabellius*, had pretended to make *one*
 " *Hypostasis* an Article of Faith; drawing
 " many very *Novel* and dangerous Conse-
 " quences from their prime Position. The

“ ὁμοῦσιν itself might have been spared, at
 “ least out of the *Creeds*, had not a fraudu-
 “ lent Abuse of good Words brought Mat-
 “ ters to that pass, that the *Catholick Faith*
 “ was in Danger of being lost under *Catho-*
 “ *lick Language*.” So likewise there would
 be no Occasion now to distinguish between
self Existence, and *necessary Existence*; be-
 tween *specifick* and *numerical Unity*; between
Person and *Substance*; between Supremacy of
Order, and of *Nature*, or to use any other
metaphysical Distinctions, did not our Adver-
 saries force us to do it, for the defeating of
 their *metaphysical Objections*, and the pre-
 serving of the *true Faith* against their Af-
 faults.

The Method by which they *first draw* us
 into *Metaphysicks*, and then *craftily complain*
 of them, is this, as it is justly set forth by
 an *excellent Hand* ^u. “ They argue, sup-
 “ pose, that the Son cannot be *God* in the
 “ strict Sense, without making *two Gods* :
 “ We answer, that *Father* and *Son* by a
 “ most intimate and ineffable Union of
 “ *Substance, Will, Power, Presence*, and the
 “ like (which we call *περὶ ἁπλότητος*) may be
 “ *one God*. They argue again, that if the
 “ *Son* be a *Son*, in our Sense, there must
 “ be a *Division*, and *separate Existence*.

^u Dr. *Waterland* in his *Defence*, p. 323.

“ We

“ We say, No ; alledging that he may be a
 “ *Son* in a *proper* Sense, and in our Sense,
 “ without *Division*, and without a *sepa-*
 “ *rate* Existence: And the Name for this is
 “ *interior Generation*. After we are come
 “ thus far, pursuing their Wandrings into
 “ *the Philosophy* of the Thing, they step
 “ back again, and tell us, that *Scripture*
 “ says nothing of this *περιχώρησις*, or *inte-*
 “ *rior Generation*. Supposing (not granting)
 “ their Pretence true. Do they set out up-
 “ on the Foot of *Scripture*? Does *Scripture*
 “ any where tell them, that *two* Divine Per-
 “ sons cannot be *one* God? Or that *Father*
 “ and *Son* must have a *separate Existence*?
 “ They argue only from the Nature and
 “ Reason of the Thing, of which they have
 “ no *adequate Idea* ; and we answer what
 “ is sufficient, and more than sufficient, to
 “ confute *meer Conjectures* in Matters above
 “ their reach. If they had not began with
 “ *unscriptural* Objections, we should have
 “ had no Occasion for *unscriptural* Answers.”
 But to them are owing all the *Metaphysicks*
 which have been used in this Cause, and
 all the Debates about *the Nature of the*
Thing, which have ever infested the Chri-
 stian Church. And if these Things are
 Matters of Offence, let those in the Name
 of Justice and Equity be answerable for it,
 by whom they are occasioned.

I proceed now to my third *general Head*, in which I am to shew, that the *Arian Scheme* is clogged with *insuperable Difficulties*, and that the Revivers of it among us have fallen into several palpable *Inconsistencies* and *Contradictions*.

Now the *Arian Doctrine* is, that the *Divine Unity* which Scripture teaches, is an *Unity of Person*, and an *Unity of supreme God*; which *one Divine Person*, and *one supreme God the Father alone* is: That, to him all *supreme Worship* is appropriated; and that the Son is a *subordinate God*, an *inferior* and *separate Being*, derived from the *Father* by his *good Pleasure*, and whom the *Father* has *appointed* to be worshiped with *inferior* and *mediate Worship*, on account of the *Dominion* and *Kingdom* imparted to him after his *Incarnation*.

But against this Doctrine there are the following unanswerable Objections.

First for Instance.

To suppose that the *Unity of God* which Scripture teaches is an *Unity of Person*, is to make Scripture, in all Appearance, *inconsistent with itself*, and void of either *Sense* or *Sincerity*; as has been proved above *.

Secondly, To suppose the Scripture to teach, that there is but one *supreme God*, is

* Sermon VI.

equally reproachful to it as the former Supposition; which likewise has been proved above^y. If it declared, there is but one *supreme* God, it would talk in the *Pagan Style*, and according to the *Pagan Theology*, which admitted *one supreme* Deity, and *other inferior* Gods under him. It would countenance the same *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*, which was practised among the *Heathens*, and be unaccountably repugnant to itself.

Thirdly, To suppose the Scripture to teach, that the *Father* is the *one supreme* God, is another *Indignity* to it; which in like manner has been shewn above^z. As the *Divine Unity* which it teaches, cannot be the *Unity* of a *supreme* God, it is in the Nature of the Thing impossible, that it should declare the *Father* to be the *one supreme* God. And if it had said any such Thing, it would have excluded the Son from *supreme* Deity, and have made him an *inferior* God: And with what Truth then could it give to the Son the *very same Characters* and *Ensigns* of *true Divinity* which it does to the Father? and assert his *Equality* with him in all Perfections?

Fourthly, To suppose the Father to be the *supreme* God, and the Son to be an *inferior* God, is as plainly to make *two Gods*,

^y Sermon VI.

^z Ibid.

the one *Supreme*, the other *Inferior*, as that *one* and *one* make *two*. And though the Father be supposed the *only supreme*, yet the Son being admitted as an *inferior* and *separate* God, he is most evidently *another God* in *Number*; a God *extrinsick* and *inferior* to the Father; and if they are not *two* Gods in *Number*, then *one* God, and *another* God are not *two*.

If the allowing of *one only* as *Supreme*, while the *other* is received and worshiped as *subordinate*, would prevent *Ditheism*, the Consequence is, that the *Heathens*, who admitted of *only one Supreme*, would not be chargeable with holding a *Plurality* of Deities; which yet the Scripture imputes to them, and condemns them for. If *two Gods* must in the *Nature of Language* signify two *co-ordinate* Gods, or Gods in the *same Sense*; and if the Son be not *another* God, because not *co-ordinate* with the Father, as the *Arians* take upon them to pronounce, what can be more evident, than that the *inferior* Deities received among the *Pagans* were not *other* Deities, and that the *first Command* forbids us not to imitate their Example, and to have *other Gods* besides the *one Supreme*? that is, the Scripture denies what it affirms, and allows what it condemns.

Neither

Neither ^a did the primitive Fathers favour the Notion of a *supreme* and *subordinate* God, or imagine, that the meer *Subordination* of the one to the other, hindered them from being *two Gods*. They pleaded that

^z The Author of the *Answer to some Queries*, &c. having appealed to the *ancient Writers* in general, and to *Athanasius*, *Hilary*, and *Basil* in particular, as clearing, by their Principles, his Doctrine from the Charge of *Tritheism*, he was thus replied to by Dr. *Waterland*. " You little imagine that the good and great Men to whom you appeal have condemned your Doctrine as *Polytheism* and *Paganism* over and over, as all know that are any Thing conversant in their Works. Well; but what have they said to countenance your Notion? This only; that *Unity of Principle* clears the *Church's* Doctrine from the Charge of *Tritheism*. Not your Doctrine; not the *Arian* Doctrine, but the *Catholic* Doctrine. For since *Equality of Nature*, and *Unity of Principle* too, are both requisite; the *Catholicks* admitting the former (as their Adversaries well knew) had nothing farther needful to insist upon, in answer to the Charge of *Tritheism*, but the latter. *Unity of Principle* and *Sameness of Nature* together, might make two Persons *one God* (according to the unanimous Opinion of the Ancients) but not either of them alone. But now in respect to the *Arian* (that is, your) Doctrine, the Presence of *Unity of Principle* is perfectly absurd. The Son is supposed a Creature of the Father's: If his being *of*, or *from* the Father in *this Sense*, makes him *one God* with the Father, it will follow, that Angels, or Men, or even Things inanimate are one God with the Father also. *Defence*, p. 339.

A little lower he says thus to the same Writer. " How can you contrive to clear your Scheme from *Polytheism*? We ask, if the Son be *God* as well as the Father? You say, yes: How then is there but *one God*? Your Answer is; the Father is *supreme*, and therefore he, *singly*, is the *one God*. This is taking away what you gave us before, and retracting what you asserted of the Son. If *Supremacy*

that the *Catholick Doctrine*, which maintained an *Equality of Nature* between Father and Son was preserved from *Polytheism*, by the Son's *Subordination*, or *Reference to the Father*, as *Head and Fountain* of the Deity; because in this Case, there was only *one Principle*, or *one Nature* supposed; and they were both, *one* and the *same* Divine Being or God. But in the *Arian Scheme*, which supposes the Son to be a *separate Being*, there is a *Difference in Nature* between him and the Father; and he is *subordinate* in the same Sense, as a *Creature* is to his *Creator*. Therefore he can no more be *one God* with the Father; than *Creatures* are so. So that the *Arians* have no Countenance from the *Ancients*, who thought it necessary, for the avoiding of *Polytheism*, to assert an *Unity of Principle*, together with *Sameness of Nature*, in Father and Son. They all along opposed the Notion of a *supreme* and *subordinate* God, while they disputed against the *Pagans* who admitted it; "And no sooner was it started
" in the Church, but they immediately

" *macy only* makes a Person God, the Son is no God upon
" your Principles: Or, if he is God notwithstanding, then
" Father and Son are *two Gods*. Turn this over as often as
" you please, you'll find it impossible to extricate your self
" from it. You can only say this, that you don't admit *two*
" *supreme* Gods. That is very true: No more did the *Pagan*
" Polytheists, nor the idolatrous *Samaritans*, nor others con-
" demned in Scripture for *Polytheism*, &c. p. 340.

" condemned

“ condemned it, as restoring of *Pagan Polytheism* and *Idolatry*. Two Gods, a greater and a less, a supreme and an inferior, no Scripture, no sound Reason, no good *Catholick* ever taught; no Church would have endured. A *separate* God from the Supreme, an *inferior created* God, would not only have been looked upon as *Polytheism* and *Contradiction*, considered in itself; but as *Heresy* and *Blasphemy*, if understood of God and Christ.

Fourthly, To suppose the Son to be an *inferior God*, is a Contradiction in Terms. For the Idea of God implies *Supremacy*, or the highest possible Excellence of *Nature* and *Perfection*; and as the highest admits of no higher, it can't be *inferior*. So that an *inferior God*, is an *inferior supreme* Nature; an *inferior supreme* Dignity: that is, it is a plain Inconsistency, or *supreme* Nonsense to which none is *inferior*.

The *Scripture* Notion of God, is of a Being necessarily existent, eternal, almighty, omniscient, infinite in all Perfections. What then is the Meaning of an *inferior God*? Is it a Being not quite so necessarily Existent, or quite so Eternal, or quite so Almighty, as God is represented to be. If it is, then it is a *God*, which is no *God*, because wanting in those Perfections, which enter into the Notion of God, and which constitute and limit that

236 S E R M O N VII.

that Notion. Is it a Being who derives *necessary Existence, Eternity*, and all Perfections from the *free Bounty* of the *supreme God*. If it does, then his Existence is *precarious* and *contingent*, as depending on *free Choice*. And therefore the supposing him to be *necessarily existent*, and *eternal*, which absolutely exclude all manner of *Contingency*, is a plain Contradiction.

Fifthly, To suppose the Son to have been *exalted into a God* after his rising from the Dead, is strangely abhorrent to *common Sense*, as well as contrary to *Scripture*. For a *made God*, or a *constituted God*, is as great a Contradiction in Nature, as an *unmade Creature*, or an *uncaus'd Effect*. And the Scripture tells us of the Son, that he was not by a kind of *Pagan Apotheosis* advanced into a Deity, as a Reward of his Sufferings; but that he was *God before the World was*; *God* before any *Creature* existed; *God* therefore *from all Eternity*; and that he will be glorified with the Father *to all Eternity*.

Sixthly, To found the Son's Title to Worship on the *Dominion* and *Kingdom* imparted to him after his Incarnation, is to suppose that he had no Title to it *before*. But the Scripture asserts on the contrary, that he had, *antecedently to his Incarnation*, the very *same* Right to Worship with the Father.

ther. For as it teaches that *true Deity*, and *creative Power*, is the *alone Ground and Foundation* of Worship, so it declares the *Son* to be the *Lord Jehovah who created the Universe*.

Lastly, To suppose the Worship of the Father to be *supreme*, and of the Son to be *inferior*, is to make *two* Worships of *different* Sorts, directly contrary to *Scripture*, which by laying down *one fundamental Rule* of Worship, *to wit*, to worship God *alone*, evidently declares, that *all* Worship is *Divine* and *Supreme*, and that there can be no other of a different Kind. In like manner, to suppose the Father to *appoint* the Worship of the Son, though a *separate* and *inferior* Being, is to open a Gap to all manner of Idolatry, by supposing that a *Creature* may receive the *appropriate Honour* of the Deity. For if God may order it to be paid to a *Creature*, then a *Creature* may receive it. But as God has reserved *all* *Worship* to himself, he cannot give *this Glory* to *another*, or impart any Degree of it to an *inferior Being*. He cannot give that to *another*, which he claims to himself exclusively of *all others*. And the Gospel therefore which directs the Worship of the Son, ascribes this Inconsistency to God; and it prescribes *Creature-Worship*, against which it protests, and recommends the like

Idolatry,

Idolatry, which was practised by the *Heathens*.

These are the unanswerable Objections against the *Arian Doctrine*. They are Difficulties which cannot be surmounted. They stick close to it, and expose its Falshood and Absurdity, notwithstanding all Endeavours to remove them.

To those *insuperable Difficulties* where-with *Arianism* is clogg'd; I must now add the palpable *Inconsistencies* and *Contradictions*, into which the Revivers of it have fallen.

As for Instance, First, They plead * that the Word *God*, when applied to the *Father*, denotes “*Him who alone has all Perfections original, underived, and independent on any;*” that is, who *alone is necessarily existent*: “*But when it is applied to the SON, it denotes one, who has NOT his Perfections of himself, but has them derived from another;*” that is, who owes his Perfections to the *free Choice* of the *Father*; for that otherwise, they could not be *derived at all*, because *necessary Acts* ^b are *no Acts*, and *necessary Causes no Causes*. So that by this Account, the Word *God*, when applied to the *Son*,

* *Reply to Dr. Waterland's Second Defence*, p. 171.

^b *Reply*, p. 251, 304.

Modest Plea, p. 173, 267.

Modest Plea Continued, p. 16.

denotes

denotes one who wants *necessary Existence*, the *distinguishing Perfection* of God; and who owes all he has to the *good Pleasure* of the one supreme Being, which is the *distinguishing Character* of a *Creature*; that is, the Word God denotes a *Creature*; and the Son is a *Creature*, while he is God. But as it may as well be said, that the Word *King* denotes a *Subject*, or the Word *Whiteness* denotes *Blackness*, so to suppose any *Creature* to be God, is to suppose *God* and *Creature* to be the *same Thing*; or that there is no manner of Difference or Distinction between them; which is a palpable Contradiction. For the Ideas of *God*, and a *Creature*, are directly opposite to each other; and to unite them in the *same Subject*, or to suppose *one* to be the *other*, is a *Contradiction in Terms*.

Secondly, They plead, ^c that the Texts relating to the *Unity* of God are all *personally* expressed; and that the Meaning of them is, that the *Person* of the Father is *the one God*, exclusively of the *Son*. And yet they allow the Son to *be God*. But if the Father *singly* be the *one God*, it is plain, that the Son can be *no God*. He cannot be the *same God*, as they contend, without be-

^c Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 2, 3.
Modest Plea Continued, p. 2.

ing the *same Person*; and he cannot be *another God*, because God is but *one*. If therefore he be neither the *same God*, nor *another God*, he can be *no God at all*; which is a plain *Contradiction*^d.

But, for avoiding it, they say, that the Son is *God*, though neither the *same* with the Father, nor *another*. He is God in a *lower Sense* of the Word; and for that Reason, he is not *another God*, nor yet the *same*; not *another*, because not another *supreme*, for two Gods must mean *two co-ordinate Gods*; and not the *same*; because not in the *same Sense* with the Father. But still the *Contradiction* returns: For if the Father be the *only God*, because alone *Supreme*; and the Son is not *another God*, because not *Supreme*; then it is *Supremacy* which makes a Person to be *God*; and therefore as they deny the *Supremacy* of the Son, they take away the Deity which they pretend to give him, and they *affirm* and *deny* him to be *God* at the same Time.

Thirdly, They allow that the Son was *God before the World was*, as being *Partaker of Divine Power and Glory with and from the Father*^e. And yet they found his *Godhead* in Transactions performed, or Powers re-

^d See Dr. *Waterland's Defence*, p. 3. and *Second Defence*, p. 27.

^e *Clark's Scripture Doctrine*, 2d Edit. p. 240.

ceived *afterwards*, which is denying him to have been God *before*. Some of them suppose ^e that his *personating* the Father under the Old Testament, and transacting Matters between God and the Creature, was all that his *Godhead* meant before his *Incarnation*; and others ^f make his *Exaltation* after his rising from the Dead to be the *sole Foundation* of his *personal Deity*. So that they manifestly *contradict* themselves.

Fourthly, They allow that the Son has *all Divine Attributes and Powers communicated to him*, such as, Omniscience, Eternity, Omnipotence, and the like. And yet they deny him at the same Time to have *any of those Attributes*, or to have them any other-wise than in a *limited Degree*, which is utterly repugnant to the very Notion of them. They expressly deny that he is *necessarily existent* ^g, or *unchangeable*: and they strive to elude all the Scripture Proofs of his *Eternity*, his *Omniscience*, and *Ubiquity* ^h. They contend that he is not Eternal in the *same Sense* with the Father; that is, *not Eternal at all*, there being but *one Sense or Kind of Eternity*; namely, a *Duration without Be-*

^e Clark's *Scripture Doctrine*, 2d Edition, p. 73.

^f *Collection of Queries*, p. 75.

^g See the *Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence* 226, 252, 253. And *Second Defence*, p. 218, 361.

^h See Sermon V.

ginning, and without End. They say that he is *Omniscient*, but in a *certain Respect*: *Omnipresent*, but *within Bounds*; and *Omnipotent*, but by his *Father's Power*, not *his own*; and they give several *metaphysical Reasons*, why these Attributes, which absolutely exclude *all Limitation*, must yet be *limited* with respect to the *Son*ⁱ: So that they pretend to set Bounds to Perfections, which admit of none; and they labour all they can to withdraw with the one Hand what they give with the other; which is gross *Prevarication* and *Inconsistency*.

Fifthly, They ^k pretend to be afraid of affirming, that the Son of God was CREATED, or that he was OUT OF NOTHING; and they allow him on the contrary to be *no Creature*. And yet they affirm, that he is not *necessarily Existent*, and that there is *no Medium* between God the Father, and a Creature^l; which is affirming by immediate Consequence, that the Son is a *precarious Being*, and a *Creature*: “ Is mutable and
“ corruptible, finite and dependent; and nei-
“ ther so perfect in his *Nature*, nor so ex-
“ alted in *Privileges*, but that the Father
“ may, if he pleases, create another equal,

ⁱ See *Scripture and Arians Compared*, p. 9.

^k Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence, p. 323.

^l Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, p. 356.

“ or even superior to him ^m.” So that according to them, “ The Son is *no Creature*”, “ but yet brought into Existence as well as “ *any Creature: No Creature*, but yet precarious in Existence as well as any “ Creature: *No Creature*, but yet dependent on the Free Will and Pleasure of “ another, as much as any Creature: *No Creature*, but yet ignorant of much more “ than he knows as well as any Creature: “ *No Creature*, but yet capable of Change “ from Strength to Weakness, and from “ Weakness to Strength again; capable of “ being made wiser, and happier, and better in every respect, as well as any Creature: *No Creature*, but yet having nothing of his own, nothing but what he “ owes to the Gratitude and Favour of his “ Lord and Governor. Such a *Creature*, “ and *no Creature*, do the *Arians* affirm the “ *Son of God* to be!

Sixthly, They suppose the Son to have been the *Father's Agent in the Creation of the Universe*; and that, *all Things were cre-*

^m This is what Dr. *Waterland* observes to the Author of the *Reply* to his *Defence*: And he tells him, that his “ asserting evidently, and by immediate necessary Consequence, that the Maker, and Redeemer, and Judge of the “ whole World is a *Creature*, ought to be sounded in the “ Ears, and rivetted in the Thoughts of all who come to “ read him, that they may be deeply sensible what he is “ doing, and whither it is that he is leading them. *Second Defence*, p 357.

ⁿ See *Scripture and Arians Compared*, p. 11.

ated by him, in Subordination to the Will and Power of the Father : And yet they suppose him a Creature at the same Time, which is a plain Contradiction. For if all Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made, it is manifest, that he must be excepted out of the Number of the Things made, and cannot possibly be a Creature ; and since there can be no intermediate Being between God and Creature, the Consequence is, that he is truly God. The Scripture every where keeps up the Distinction between Creator, and Creature^o ; and nothing can be more evident, than that they are Characters directly opposite the one to the other. The Creator cannot be a Creature, and a Creature cannot be Creator ; and the supposing of either to be the other, is the supposing of Light to be Darknefs ; or of Impossibilities to be possible P.

Seventhly,

*“ ° Creation is every where represented in Scripture as
 “ a Divine Work ; a Work peculiar to God alone, setting
 “ forth his supreme Excellency, and unbounded Perfections.
 “ The Creator is truly God, eternally and essentially God,
 “ and the sole Object of Worship in Opposition to all Crea-
 “ tures. No Worship is to be paid to any Person who is
 “ not God by Nature ; none to any Creature but the Creator
 “ only, Gal. iv. 8. Rom. i. 25. So that Creator and Crea-
 “ ture are opposites ; the one God by Nature, and Adora-
 “ ble ; the other, the reverse. The Creator therefore can-
 “ not be a Creature, nor a Creature, Creator ; and Medium
 “ between them there can be none.” See Scripture and
 Arians Compared, p. 13.*

*P “ The Arians in ascribing Creation to a Creature,——
 “ exposed their Cause. Since they resolved to make a Crea-
 “ ture*

Seventhly, They allow that the Son is *God by Nature*, and *as truly as Man is by Nature truly Man*; and yet they teach that he was made a God by *voluntary* Appointment, and resolve his Godhead into the *Power* and *Dominion* given to him by the Father. So that he is God by *Nature*; but yet not *naturally*, or *necessarily* God: God by *Nature*, but yet owing his Deity to an *adventitious* and *temporary* Office: God by *Nature*, but having his Nature, *before* his *Godhead commenc'd*, and being to continue, after his *Godhead shall expire* and be extinct. In a Word, God by *Nature*, *as much as Man is by Nature Man*, but yet wanting the most *essential Character* of God, which makes God to be God ⁹.

Eighthly, They allow the Son to have been *God before the Creation*, and *immediate Artificer*, or *Maker of the Universe*, which is allowing him to have had a Right to *Worship*, *antecedently to his Incarnation*; and yet, they found his Title to *Worship meerly on*

“ *ture only of the Son of God*, they should not have allowed
 “ him any *Power of Creating*, but should have interpreted
 “ all those Texts which speak in favour of it, as the *Soci-*
 “ *nians* have done since, of a *metaphorical Creation*. That
 “ indeed had been novel and strained enough; but accom-
 “ panied with less Absurdity than the other. Dr. *Water-*
land's Defence, p. 193. See also p. 194, &c.

⁹ See *Scripture and Arians Compared*, p. 14.

Dr. *Waterland's First and Second Defence* under *Query 24*.

the Powers given him after he was incarnate; which is a plain *Inconsistency*. If the Son *made the World*, and was *God before the Creation*; and if *making the World*, and being *truly God*, be the *alone Ground and Reason* of Worship laid down in Scripture, then it is certain, that the Son had, before he became Man, the *very same Right* and Title to Worship with the *Father*; and therefore to suppose him to be *God and Creator*, and yet to have *no Claim* to Worship, till after he became Man, is an evident *Contradiction*.

And hereupon † it has well been observed, that our *modern Arians* confound themselves between the two Schemes, the *Arian* and *Socinian*; and discover great Unskilfulness and Want of Thought, by blending them together. They might have gone on upon either Scheme with tolerable Consistency, but their tacking both together, though perfectly irreconcilable, is all over repugnant.

“ The *Socinians* founded the Worship of
 “ Christ upon the *Power of Judging*, and
 “ his *Exaltation*: But then they were never
 “ so silly as to suppose him *God and Cre-*
 “ *ator* before. The *Arians* founded the
 “ Worship of Christ upon his being *God*

† Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 406.

“ and

“ and *Creator* before the World : But then
 “ they were not so weak, as to found it
 “ upon the *Power of Judging* !” Whereas
 the present Teachers of *Arianism*, marvel-
 lously join the two Schemes together, and
 unite their clashing and interfering Parts, in
 the Composition of a new Scheme of their
 own. Such is their great Dexterity and
 Penetration !

Lastly, They allow the Son to be *truly*
God, and vested with Capacity to frame and
 govern the World ; and yet suppose, that
 he was *emptied of his Godhead*, and stripped
 of his Perfections when he became Man :
 That, he sunk beneath the Angels, and
 was transformed into a *meer human Person* :
 That, after a gradual Progress from the
 Weaknesses of a Child to the Maturity and
 Perfection of a Man, he was in some Time
 made a God of again. He was exalted into
 a God upon his Resurrection. But the
 Godhead which he then received is to last
 no longer than his mediatorial Kingdom,
 “ He is to surrender his Worship, his Di-
 “ vine Honours, and Robes of Majesty at
 “ the End of the World. When his Friends
 “ and Followers are to receive their Crowns
 “ to have and to hold to all Eternity, he is
 “ to lose and forfeit his. They must in-

¹ *Second Defence*, p. 407.

² *See Scripture and Arians Compared*, p. 7, 18.

“crease, but he must decrease. They are to
 “grow up, he is to grow down, and sink out
 “of Godhead.” This is their true God! a
changeable, passable, and transitory God! a God
 losing his Deity, and then gaining it again,
 and then losing it to all Eternity! “A
 “shocking Thought, to as many as have
 “any just Regard for Sacred Writ, any Love
 “or Veneration for their blessed Lord; and
 “have not lost the Grace of Discernment,
 “and the Spirit of a sound Mind, by affect-
 “ing to be wiser than all the Churches of
 “God.”

These are some of the *Inconsistencies*, and
Contradictions, into which the Revivers of
Arianism have fallen. They are certain,
 evident and irrefragable. There is no Pos-
 sibility either of *evading*, or *reconciling* them:
 And as they are the Effects of setting up
vain Philosophy as the Standard of all Truth,
 so they must unavoidably sink the Cause,
 which carries such *Prophanations* of God’s
 Word, such *Abuses* of our blessed Lord, and
 such *Extravagancies* of Nonsense in the
 Bowels of it.

To shun the Difficulties which attend
 the Notion of Christ’s *true Divinity*, and to
 admit nothing into their Faith but what
 they perfectly understand, they run into these
 gross Repugnancies. We cannot conceive
how the Son can be *one* and the *same* God
 with

with the Father: *How* he can be *distinct* Substance subsisting in the *one* Divine Substance: *How* he can be *generated* from the Father, and yet be *equally eternal*, and *equally necessary* with him: And therefore to avoid these Difficulties, which seem also to be Errors in Philosophy, because Person and Being are *reciprocal*; because Substance *derived* and *underived* must be different; because Generation is an *Act*, and an Act implies *free Choice*, and free Choice argues *precarious* Existence, and precarious Existence is a Contradiction to *eternal, necessary* Existence; to avoid, I say, these *seeming* Errors in Philosophy, the *Arians* suppose the Son to be a *God*, but of a *different Nature* from the Father; a *God*, but of the Father's *making*: A *God by Nature*, but *constituted by Office*: An Object of Worship, but of such as *terminates in the Father*: An adorable Being, but by the *Father's Appointment*: that is, they suppose him a *God*, and *no God*; a *Creature*, and *no Creature*; an *Object*, and *no Object* of Worship. Absurdities so flagrant, that one would wonder how any Man of *common Sense* could embrace them, or any Man of *common Piety* could pretend, that they are taught in the Word of God.

SERMON VIII.

ROMANS ix. *ver.* 5.

*Of whom as concerning the Flesh
Christ came, who is over all, God
blessed for ever. Amen.*

HAVING shewn that the Arguments for the Deity of our Saviour have evidently succeeded in the Debate upon this Subject, and that the *Arian Scheme* is clogged with *insuperable Difficulties*, and the Revivers of it among us have fallen into several palpable *Inconsistencies* and *Contradictions*; I proceed now in the last Place, to set forth the Necessity of believing the *true Divinity* of Christ, not only because the Scripture affirms it, but likewise upon other Considerations of great Importance.

First,

First, It is necessary to believe the Deity of our Saviour, because the Scripture requires us so to do.

Secondly, Because without this Belief, we must be guilty of *Idolatry* in our *Religious Worship*.

Thirdly, Because the Belief of his Divinity is requisite to confirm our Faith in the Unblameableness of his *moral Character*, and in the Truth of his *Divine Mission* and *Authority*.

Fourthly, Because it is requisite to preserve in us a *just Reverence* for *Sacred Writ*, or, a Conviction upon our Minds that it is a *sincere, consistent* and *pious* Book, wrote by the *Inspiration* of God.

Fifthly, Because it is necessary to confirm our Faith in the *Efficacy* of Christ's *Mediation*, or the Certainty of his having obtained for us by his Sufferings and Obedience a *Covenant of Pardon* and *eternal Life*.

Lastly, Because necessary to excite a due Sense of the *Divine Love* in his becoming our *Mediator*, and to engage us to acknowledge and celebrate it with *suitable Degrees* of Thankfulness.

First, It is necessary to believe the *true Deity* of our Saviour, because God requires us so to do.

As

252 S E R M O N V I I I .

As he hath affirmed this Doctrine in the Gospel, and proposed it to our Faith, it is evidently his Will that we should believe it; and our Assent to it is Matter of *strict Duty*, though there were no *special Command* for it: Because it is included under the *general Law* of Faith, and under the *general Mandate* to believe the Gospel.

But God hath moreover *expresly commanded* us to believe in our Saviour as his *Son*, his *only begotten Son*: that is, as being *God of God*, or having the Divine Nature by *eternal Communication* from the Father. For this alone is the Sense of the Term *only begotten Son*, which can fully account for it, or give a sufficient Reason of its Application to him.

Several • Reasons have been assigned, for giving our Saviour this Name; as, that he
was

* *Episcopus* contended that he was called the Son of God κατ' ἰσχυρ in respect of his *human Nature* on these four Accounts; but he is fully refuted by Bishop *Bull*, in his *Judicium Ecclesie Catholicae*, where after considering every Thing advanced by *Episcopus*, he concludes the Debate in these Words. Itaque tandem omnibus, quatuor modis, quibus Christum, quatenus Homo est, Dei Filium κατ' ἰσχυρ in Scripturis dici contendit *Episcopus*, expensis atque examinatis, manifestum fecimus, nullo istorum modorum Christum propriè dici posse, Filium Dei unicum sive *unigenitum*. Quin & ex abundanti ostendimus in locis Scripturae, quibus modi isti contineri videntur, longè aliam atque excellentiorem Servatoris nostri Filiationem; qua scilicet antequam Homo factus fuit, adeoque ante res omnes creatas apud Deum

was so called, because of his *miraculous Birth*: Because of his *Appointment to the Office of Messiah*: Because of his *Resurrection from the Dead*; and because of his *having all Judgment committed to him*. But neither his *miraculous Birth*, nor the other Things specified, reach the full meaning of the Character, *only begotten Son*, or shew him to be a Son in a *Sense peculiar to himself*, by which he is distinguished from, and advanced above *all others*; and therefore they don't account for his being called such a Son.

It is observable of them all, that they have no higher a View, than to the Time of his Appearance in our Nature, and that they are drawn from Facts relating to his Birth, and the Execution of his Office. Whereas the Scripture teaches us, not only that he existed, *before his Incarnation*, but that *he was begotten before all Creatures*^b: That, *he was in the Beginning*^c, or from all Eternity, *with God, and was God*: That, he was the *only begotten Son*, antecedently to

Deum Patrem ut unicus ejus Filius, extiterit, satis perspicue significari. *Bul. Judic. Eccl. Cathol. Edit. Oxon. 1694. p. 116.*

The late Dr. Clark in his *famous Exposition* of the Church Catechism, assigned the *same Reasons* for calling Christ the Son of God: But he likewise is particularly confuted by the Author of the *Remarks* on his *Exposition*. See *Remarks*,

P. 44.

^b Coloff. i. 15. See Dr. Waterland's *Sermons*, p. 59.

^c John i. 1.

his

254 SERMON VIII.

his Mission into the World ^d: That, he was the *Son of God* in such a Sense, as to be the *Brightness of his Father's Glory*, and the *express Image of his Person*^e; in such a Sense, as to be the *Creator and Upholder of the Universe*^f; as to be *equal to the Father*, and *one with him*^g; and therefore his *eternal Generation of the Father*, his being *God of God from the Beginning*, is that *appropriate Sonship*, excluding all others from any Share or Similitude of it, by which he really is the *only begotten Son*, and by which his being so called, can be fully accounted for.

Under this eminent and *Divine Character*, God commands us to believe in him. For we read, that *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. For God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God*^h. In which

^d John iii. 16.—x. 35, 36.—xvi. 28. 1 Epist. iv. 9.
Bull. *Judic. Eccl. Cath.* p. 102, 106.

^e Heb. i. 2.

^f Heb. i. 3, 10.

^g Joh. v. 17, 18. x. 30, 33.

^h Joh. iii. 16, 17, 18.

Words,

Words, we are plainly required to believe the *Divine Nature* of Christ, or his *Sonship*, as having that Nature from the Father ; and therefore the Belief of it is a necessary Instance of Obedience to the Will, and of Submission to the Authority of God.

He who refuses to believe it, acts in Opposition to God's Command, and he incurs the Guilt and Penalty of Sin by so doing : If he thinks his Unbelief to be warrantable, because the Doctrine is *mysterious*, he deceives himself strangely. For as he has plain Evidence of God's affirming it, and requiring him to believe it, he is obliged in Deference to God's *Truth* and *Authority* to believe it ; and the refusal of his Assent, because he cannot comprehend it, is not only an Act of *Disobedience* to God, but an *Indignity* to his *Knowledge* and *Veracity*, as it is supposing by necessary Implication, that his Affirmation may be *false*.

The Vertue of *Faith*, with respect to *Mysteries* consists in this, that it is an *entire Dependence on the Truth of God* ; an Assent given purely for *his Sake*, and upon the Credit of *his Authority*. This is a proper Acknowledgment of his infinite Perfections, and a proper Expression of Respect to him. Whereas the Disbelief of *Mysteries* is a *Denial of God's Wisdom*, or a Distrust of his *Veracity* ; and it is using him in Consequence
with

with no greater Regard, than we do a *fallible* and *fallacious Man*.

If we believe no other Doctrines but what we clearly perceive, we do not believe God, but only *our selves*. We behave in this Case to him, as many of the *Samaritans* did to the Woman of their City, upon her reporting to them what they could not readily apprehend. For when she told them she had seen a Man who had discovered all the Transactions of her Life, this was so *mysterious* a Thing, that they would not believe it upon her Testimony, but resolved for their farther Satisfaction to converse with him themselves: And when they were convinced of his wonderful Abilities by their *own Perception*, they then said to her, *Now we believe, not for thy saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World*¹.

This is a just Image of our Behaviour to God, if we refuse to believe what we do not comprehend. We tell him in effect, we will not believe *for his saying*, nor credit him in any Thing beyond our Knowledge: And if this be treating him with Indignity, as it certainly is, we may conclude, that the *Mysteriousness* of a Doctrine is no Excuse for disbelieving it.

¹ Joh. iv. 42.

If any Man pleads that the Belief of *Mysteries* is *impossible*, because they are *not conceivable*, since we cannot believe *beyond our Conceptions*, and that therefore the Disbelief of them can't be *criminal*, as being *unavoidable*, his Plea is *delusory*, because *sophistical*. For there is a *Fallacy* in supposing that *Mysteries* are inconceivable in *such Degree*, as not to be capable of *any* Belief. They are not *absolutely* inconceivable, but only in a *certain Respect*; that is, they surpass our Understanding in respect of their *Manner*; or, we cannot perceive, or explain *how they are*; but yet we apprehend them in *some Degree*: We have a Notion of them in *the general*, and our Ideas reach to the Extent in which they are revealed. As we are taught, for Instance, that the *one God* subsists in *Three Persons*; and that Christ *was manifested in the Flesh*; so we understand these Doctrines in *some Measure*. We have as clear an Apprehension of them, as we have of the *Self-existence*, the *Eternity*, and the *Omnipresence* of God; and if so, it is *equally* in our Power to believe the one, as the other. We may believe the Existence of the *One God* in *Three Persons*, and the *Union* of the *Divine Nature* with the *Human* in the Person of Christ, as far as our Conceptions reach, in the same manner, as we believe *God to exist*, without any *Cause* or

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Begin-

Beginning of Existence. We may believe the Fact, that God is three Persons, though we cannot tell *how*; just as we believe the Fact, that he has neither *Cause*, nor *Beginning* of Existence, though we cannot account for it.

If indeed it were true, that we have no Conception *at all* of the Gospel *Mysteries*, then it would be true likewise, that we could not believe them; because it is impossible to believe that, of which we have no Idea. A Proposition *perfectly* unknown, is a meer Sound to us without any Meaning; and for that Reason we cannot assent to it. Suppose, for Instance, that a Person tells us in an *unknown Tongue*, that Charity is a glorious Virtue, and the Bond of Perfectness, we may believe that he speaks the Truth, whatever it be, but we can't believe the *particular* Thing, the *Gloriousness* and *Perfection* of Charity which he affirms, because we know not what he says. But the *Mysteries* of the Gospel are not Propositions of which we have *no Idea*. We conceive and understand them in *Part*, and our Faith may reach as far as our Ideas. We may believe what we do understand of a Doctrine, though the *Manner* of it be inconceivable; and we may assent to as much as we know, though our Knowledge be not perfect and complete; and therefore to al-
ledge

ledge that we cannot believe the *Trinity*, or the *essential Godhead* of Christ, because they are *mysterious*, must be a *vain Allegation*, because it is a *false one*.

There is this farther Reason why Unbelief is criminal, because it is founded in *Pride of Understanding*.

Self-evident it is that what God declares must be infallibly true, though we cannot comprehend it. There are innumerable Truths open to him, which lye beyond the reach of our Perception. We may as well think to take up the Ocean in the Hollow of our Hands, as to comprehend the Treasures of his infinite Mind : And we may as well suppose, that he doth not exist, or govern the World which he created, as that he may affirm any Thing which is false, or prescribe any Thing which is unreasonable. But if the Mind be swelled with an extravagant Conceit of its Abilities, it induceth Men to think, that there is nothing *too sublime* for their Conception ; no Truth *beyond the Ken* of their Penetration : And hereupon it is natural for them to resolve, that they will not believe, what they don't comprehend.

Hence it is, that with respect to the Doctrines of the Gospel, their *first* Enquiry is, whether they can fully understand them. They overlook the Evidences of their Truth ;

and only debate the Question upon the Principles of Philosophy, *How can these Things be?* And if they cannot perceive *how they are*, they reject them as incredible. They conclude from their Incapacity to perceive them, that God cannot reveal them; and they regard their *metaphysical* Reasonings beyond all the Proofs of his affirming them: So that they set up their *Philosophy*, as the *supreme Judge* of all Truth; and as the Rule to which *Scripture* and *Fathers* must yield. This is the Oracle in which they confide, and which they prefer to the plainest Dictates of infallible Wisdom: And since the doing this is a kind of *Idolatry*, the exalting of *Reason* above the *Word of God*, and transferring to *Reason* the Honour which is due to him, therefore the Disbelief founded upon it must be utterly inexcusable.

Let this be a Caution to us, in all our Enquiries about the *Rule of Faith*, or the Doctrines of the Gospel, to examine *first of all*, whether they are *really revealed*, and not, whether *we can comprehend them*. This is the *right*, and *safe* Way of proceeding: *Right*, because most proper to answer the End of our Enquiries; and *safe*, because most effectual to keep us from dangerous Errors. If in the *first Place* we search the Scripture, and, for our better Information, compare it with itself, and consult the Sense
of

of the *Primitive Church*, and the Determination of *our Own* in which we live: And if we believe every Doctrine which we find, upon such Examination, to be revealed; if we believe it upon this Principle, that God hath revealed it, though we don't comprehend it, we certainly do what is *rational* and *warrantable* in the Sight of God, and he can never reprove our Conduct, though we should happen, in any Point to be mistaken.

But if we *first* enquire into the *Nature* of Doctrines, and determine for, or against them, according as they are evident, or not evident to our Reason: If we reject those which are *mysterious*, as incredible and fictitious, we make our Perception the *Rule of Faith*. We presume that God cannot reveal, nor make any Thing credible by his Affirmation, which we don't *our selves see to be true*. We arrogate by this Presumption, a kind of Equality of Wisdom with God himself. We fill our Minds with Prejudices, and false Apprehensions, which indispose them to behold, or receive the Truth, and we run the greatest Hazard of *making Shipwreck of Faith*.

It is certain, that our want of perceiving a Doctrine, is no Argument against God's revealing it, unless we could prove that it is impossible for God to affirm a Doctrine which we cannot perceive: And as the Question, whether God has affirmed it, de-

pende *solely* on the Evidence of Scripture, so if that Evidence be *clear* and *full*, it is not to be overborne, or destroyed by the *Abstruseness* of the Doctrine; but it retains its Nature and Force, whether we can conceive the Doctrine or no, and demands our Assent to it, notwithstanding its *Mysteriousness*. For we have nothing to do with the particular *Modus* of a Doctrine; or with laboured Disquisitions *how it can be*. We are only to enquire after the Fact, *whether it is*; that is, whether *God has revealed it*. This is the Use we are to make of *Reason*; and if we find that he has revealed it, we are to believe it so far as we perceive it. Whatever *Mystery* there is, or Transcendency to our Conceptions, *that* we have nothing to do with: as God has not thought fit to reveal it, so he doth not require us to believe it. Why then should we officiously perplex our Heads with blind Speculations about it; and *pretending to be wise above what is written*, lose our Faith in the unhappy Attempt? Methinks, we should rather leave that to him, to *whom secret Things belong*; and believe *in part* what he has revealed *in part*, extending our Faith to the utmost reach of our Ideas.

But Secondly, The Belief of our Saviour's Divinity is necessary to secure us
from

from *Idolatry* in our *Religious Addresses* to him.

We of the *Church of England* are directed in our *Liturgy* to *call upon*, and *glorify*, our Lord *Jesus Christ*, as well as *the Father*. We are taught, not only to pray *through his Mediation*; but likewise to *pray directly* to him; to beseech him to *have Mercy upon us*, to *pardon our Sins*, and to *help our Infirmities*; and we are taught moreover, not only to glorify the Father *by him*; but to *glorify him jointly with the Father*, and to ascribe the *same Glory* to him, which we do to the *Father*. So that when we join in the Offices of our *Liturgy*, that excellent Treasure of primitive Devotion, *concluded and set forth* (as the publick Voice of the Kingdom hath declared) *by the Aid of the Holy Ghost*, we *worship and adore* our blessed Saviour. We *pray to him* for his Blessings: We *praise him* for the Effects of his Bounty; and we *glorify him according to his excellent Greatness*.

Now ^k the Scripture directs us to worship the Lord our God, and him only to serve. The one invariable Rule of Worship prescribed to us, is to worship *God alone*; the *true God*, the *Maker of all Things*, in Opposition to all other Beings; and the Reasons

* See Sermon the VIth.

upon which all *Religious Worship* is appropriated to him, such as, because he is *Jehovah*; because *Creator* and *Preserver* of the Universe, confine it *unalterably* to him, and *absolutely exclude* all others from any *Part* or *Degree* of it; and therefore unless we believe our Saviour to be *truly God*, we cannot *lawfully* worship him; for we act contrary to the *plain Law of God* in so doing. No Excellence of Nature, nor Height of good Offices relative to us, can warrant our Practice. The Worship of him is *impious* and *idolatrous*; and as often as we come to Church, and bear our Parts in the Service, we affront God Almighty by transgressing his Command. We set up *another God besides him*. We transfer to a *Creature* the Worship which he has limited to himself; and our Prayers and Praises are turned into *Sin*.

How the *Arians* can join in our Forms of Worship might be matter of Wonder, did we not *know the Men, and their Communication*. They alledge, that they consider Christ as only an *inferior* God, and intend him no more than *inferior* Worship. *Supreme* and *ultimate* Worship they reserve to the *Father*. But this is the same Plea which the *Heathens* of old used for the Worship of their *Deities*, and which the *Papists* now use for the Worship of *Saints* and *Angels*. And it is evidently a most frivolous Pretence. For since the Scripture directs us to worship
God

God only; to offer *all Acts* of Religious Worship to *him alone*, we are not at Liberty to worship any other Being, whatever be the Meaning or Design with which we do so. Though we consider that Being as ever so *inferior*, or intend it ever so *inferior* Worship, still the *Act of Worship* we offer to it, is contrary to that Rule, which appropriates *all Acts of Worship* to God alone; and therefore it is *Idolatry* in the *Arians* to worship our Saviour, whom they do not believe to be *truly God*.

But to avoid this *Idolatry*, of which they at length seem to be sensible, they¹ are now for *dropping altogether* the Worship of Christ. They contend that no *Prayers* or *Praises* are to be offered *directly* to him; but *all* to God the Father *through his Mediation*. But this Expedient will never do. To escape one Difficulty, they run into another equally insuperable. For the Scripture as plainly disallows the *dropping of Christ's Worship*, as it does the Worship of *any Creature*; since it gives us many^m Commands to *pray to*, and

¹ See the *Remarks on Dr. Clark's Exposition*, p. 9.

^m Ps. ii. 12.

If. viii. 13. compared with 1 Pet. iii. 15.

Heb. i. 6.

If. xxviii. 16. compared with Rom. x. 11. and 1 Pet. ii. 6.

John xiv. 1.

Acts vii. 59, 60.

v. 22, 23.

Luk. xxiii. 34, 46.

Mat. viii. 25.

See the *Remarks on the late Dr.*

Luk. xxiv. 51, 52.

Clark's Catechism, p. 11.

xvii. 5.

Joh. xx. 28.

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266 S E R M O N V I I I .

adore him DIRECTLY; and many Examples of this Religious Homage address'd to him. The *Socinians* Themselves, upon the Strength of these Evidences, contend for the *Worship* of him: Their *famous Catechism* ascribes to him both *Invocation* and *Adoration*, and does not allow those to be *Christians*, who deny it. What then will the *Arians* do in this last Retreat? They are condemn'd to be *no Christians* by their *Fellow-Labourers in Heresy*: And indeed, as the *Worship* of Christ is *so plainly commanded* by the Christian Law, and made *a Part* of the Gospel-Institution, it is certain, that he who disclaims and denies it, can have very little Claim to the Character of a *Christian*. There is but one way to avoid all Difficulties in this Matter; and that is, to believe our Saviour to be *truly God*: And then we may *Worship* him upon *Scripture Principles*, and our *Faith* and *Devotions* may support and cherish each other.

Thirdly, The Belief of our Saviour's *Divinity* is requisite to confirm our Faith in the Unblameableness of his *moral Character*, and in the Truth of his *Divine Mission and Authority*.

It is evident, that he asserted himself to be a *Divine Person*. He took all Opportunities to declare his *peculiar Dignity*, and to shew that he was *really God* as well as Man.
He

He affirmed himself to be the *Son of God* in such a Sense, as *no Creature* can possibly be; in such a Sense, as to *be in the Father, and the Father in himⁿ*; as to be *inseparably united to, and equal with the Father*; as to have the *same Almighty Power*; the *same unlimited Authority*; the *same Right to Religious Worship*; the *same all Things* which the Father hath; and in answer to a Charge of *Blasphemy*, for *making himself equal with God*, he does not deny the Ground of the Accusation, or plead, that he had not *equaliz'd himself* to the Father; that, he abhorred the Thought of such Presumption, and pretended to be no more than a *Creature* of God's, acting by his Commission; but he still asserts his *Equality* with him in stronger Expressions; and insists upon it, that he had done no more than what he had a *strict Right* to do; and it is observable, that the main Drift of his Discourses, excepting those relating to Morality, is to magnify his personal Excellence, and to prove himself *Messiah*, and *truly God*.

If therefore he was not a *Divine Person*, he seems to have affected to be thought so; to have coveted Divine Honours, and usurp-

^a Joh. v. 17, 18.

x. 30, 38.

v. 19, 20, 21, 23.

xiv. 1.

xvi. 14, 15.

ed a Character, which did not belong to him ; and if so, how can we believe that he was a *Divine Teacher* ; or conclude that there is no *Virtue* and *Authority* in his Religion, than there is in the Advices of *Philosophy*, or in the Directions of *Mahomet* ?

If ° he was but a *meer* Embassador, or Agent between God and Man, why should he extol *himself* to so prodigious a Degree ? Why, should he lay such Stress upon his own personal Dignity ? Why, set forth his own personal Powers and Prerogatives, and demand, in vertue of them, the *same Honour and Worship* which are due to the Father ? Should he not rather have pressed the Doctrine of the *one God* ? the Necessity of Obedience to his Laws ? the Rewards attending it, and the Penalties consequent upon the Neglect of it ? Should he not have proclaimed the *infinite* Distance between *his Lord* and *himself* ; and been solicitous for his *Master's Honour*, instead of *his own* ? Should he not have dreaded to assume an *Equality* with his God, and attempt to *rob him* of his *peculiar Glory* ? Did ever any Teacher, either Prophet, or Angel, dare to do this, or presume to arrogate so much to himself ? Let any *Arian* account, if he can, for this Conduct of our Saviour, upon his *Hypothesis*.

° See Dr. Fiddes's *Body of Divinity*, Vol. i. p. 416.

Let

Let him shew how *any Creature* can properly express himself in this manner; *Ye^p believe in God, believe also in me. If ye believe not that I am HE, that is, the true Jehovah, ye shall die in your Sins. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: No Man cometh to the Father but by me. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. If any Man love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him; and WE will come unto him, and make our Abode with him.* Is this a fit Style for *any Creature* to use? Or is it tolerable in *any Creature* to join himself so familiarly with God, and to challenge the same *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Obedience* which are paid to him? So that it seems hard to conceive, how any Men can be Christians indeed, who disbelieve his essential Godhead. For to be *really* a Christian, is to believe in Jesus Christ as a *Divine Instructor*, and the *alone Saviour* of the World, and to act in Conformity to his Doctrine, in Assurance of eternal Happiness and Salvation. But this we can scarcely do, if we are not persuaded of his *Justice* and *Truth* in asserting his *Divinity*, and therefore without such Persuasion, we can scarcely be *Christians*.

^p See the Force of these Expressions explain'd in Dr. Knight's Sermons, p. 205, &c.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The Belief of *Christ's Divinity*, is requisite to preserve in us a *just Reverence* for Sacred Writ, or a Conviction upon our Minds, that it is a *Sincere, Consistent* and *Pious Book*, wrote by the *Inspiration* of God

It is observable, that *every Characteristick* of the true God is attributed to Christ; not only his *peculiar* Titles, but his *incommunicable* Perfections; and moreover his *appropriate* Work of *Creation* and *Preservation*; and his *reserved* Privilege of *Religious Worship*. If therefore Christ be not *truly* God, what can we think of Scripture, which has given us these *several concurrent* Proofs of his *Divinity*? What can we infer from its crowding in so many Evidences of a Doctrine, which it intended not to teach? We must conclude it to be a *very fallacious* and *inconsistent* Book; to have a direct Tendency to exalt a *Creature* into the Place of *God*; and to ensnare us by so doing in the Notion of a *Rival Deity*, and in the Practice of *Creature Worship*.

If the Persuasion of *Christ's Divinity* be a Mistake, it is a Mistake which *Scripture* has in a manner *unavoidably* imposed upon the Christian World. The *plain* and *irresistible*

^a See Dr. Waterland's *Sermons*, p. 277.

Reasons for it appearing in that Book, introduced it at first, and have continued it ever since, in spite of all Opposition. If we carry our Searches from the present Age quite up to that of the Apostles, we find, all the Way as we pass, manifest Tokens of the Prevalence of this Persuasion. We meet with it in the *publick Confessions* of Faith, and in the *publick Offices* of Devotions: We meet with it in the *Determinations* of Councils; in the *Censures* passed on its Opposers; and in the *Books* of eminent Writers: "Nor
" can we find so much as *one Man* of any
" considerable Repute among Christians,
" whom we can certainly prove to have re-
" jected it." If therefore the *Divinity* of Christ be not taught in Scripture, it will follow, that the *Christian Church* has all along been universally deceived: that Those who lived nearest the *Apostolical* Times, and had the *best Opportunities* for knowing the Mind of Scripture, did yet mistake it; and that, the *wisest* and *most judicious* Christians have in *all Ages* been caught in the *same* Delusion: And if so, it should seem that the Scripture *led them* into the Mistake, and what Opinion then shall we entertain of it?

Nor indeed can it well be thought, that the *Scripture* is a *Consistent*, a *Sensible*, and

Good Book, but upon the Supposition, that it affirms the *true Divinity* of Christ. For if you suppose it to teach, that he is a *Creature only*, you suppose it to be in several Respects plainly repugnant, and to countenance *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*.

As for Instance first, If it teaches, that Christ is a *Creature only*, it teaches that a *Creature* has *all the distinguishing* Characters of the *true God*: *All those Properties* and *Perfections* which belong *incommunicably* to him; and which it ascribes *peculiarly* to the *true God*, to express his *peerless* Majesty, his *infinite Superiority* to any *Creature*.

Secondly, If it teaches, that Christ is a *Creature only*, it teaches that a *Creature* was *Creator*; the *Lord Jehovah*, who made the *World*. And yet it every where ascribes the *Creation* to *God only*, representing it as a *Work* peculiar to them; and every where asserts the *Creator* to be *truly God*, *eternally* and *essentially* *Divine*; in *Opposition* to *all Creatures*.

Thirdly, If it teaches that Christ is a *Creature only*, it teaches that a *Creature* may be *worshipped*: A *Creature* may receive the *Religious Addresses*, the *Prayers* and *Thanksgivings* of his *Fellow Creatures*: And yet, it declares on the contrary, that *God only* is to be *worshipped*: He alone, *exclusively* of all *Creatures*: and its main Design was to *root out*

out *Creature Worship* ; and to engage Men to turn from this *Vanity* to the living God ^f.

Fourthly, If. it teaches that Christ is a *Creature* only, it teaches that a *Creature* may be advanced into a God ; a precarious, dependent, limited Being, may be made necessarily existent, eternal, unchangeable, and infinite in all Perfections : For this is the Description which it gives of God ; and the same it applies to Christ in as strong Terms, as it does to the Father. And what then can we think of a Book, which is so strangely absurd and contradictory?

These are some ^t of the *Inconsistencies* chargeable on Scripture, if we suppose Christ to be a *Creature*, or not truly, and by Nature God ; and therefore the Belief of his essential Deity is requisite to assure us of its Divine Authority.

Of this there is one Evidence, which we could wish there was not ; and that is, that the Opposers of Christ's Divinity are gone off in a great Measure from *Christian Principles*, and are become little better than *Deists*. Their arbitrary Expositions of Scrip-

^f Acts xiv. 15.

^t N. B. There are several other *Inconsistencies* chargeable on Scripture, upon Supposition that it teaches Christ to be a *Creature* ; as may be seen in Sermon the VIIth, where the Difficulties attending the *Arian Scheme*, and the Contradictions into which the *Revivers* of it have fallen, are particularly specified.

ture, which greatly disparage it, and tend to render it contemptible, have a mischievous Effect on themselves, and lessen their own Regard for it. *Scripture*, as they interpret it, has nothing *mysterious* in its *Doctrine*; but its *Phrase* is full of *Mystery*^u, and its *Sense* of *Contradiction*; and the Freedom they have taken with it, has by Degrees bred Contempt. Some of them have lately been *Advocates* for *Infidelity*. They have contended that *Reason* is so *absolutely sufficient*, as to take away the *Need, or Use of Revelation*; that, Men may, by their *Reason alone*, attain to the *same Degree* of Perfection and Happiness, as is attainable by the *Gospel*. They have denied that Christ *satisfied* for the Sins of Mankind, or *purchased* by his Death the Terms of Pardon and Salvation; or that *Christianity* is a better System of *Morality* than what was taught by the *Heathen Philosophers*, or in the least excels *Natural Religion*, as a *Rule of Life*^x. And these are the *specifick* Notions of *Deists*^y, and such as no true *Christian* can embrace.

Fifthly, The Belief of Christ's *Divinity*, is necessary to confirm our Faith in the *Effi-*

^u See Dean Young's *Sermons*, Vol. 2. p. 78.

^x See the *Plea for Human Reason*; and, the *Defence of it*; both wrote by a noted *Arian*.

^y They are the Notions advanced in the famous Code of *Deism*, called *Christianity as old as the Creation*.

cacy of his *Mediation*, or the Certainty of his having obtained for us, a *Covenant* of *eternal Life*.

As we are all of us *Sinners*, we are in course liable to Punishment. For Sin being a Transgression of God's Laws, is an *Injury* and *Dis honour* to him the Author of them; and therefore bindeth over the offending Party, to receive a Penalty *proportionate* to his Offence. Nor is it in our Power, by any Actions or Sufferings of ours, to remove the Obligation to Punishment incurred by our Sins. For whatever Sorrow we express, or whatever Course of Humiliation we go through on their Account, it cannot be *meritorious* of Pardon, or oblige God in *Justice* to forgive us, because it is not a *Compensation* for them, or a *full Amends* for the *Injury* and *Dis honour* they have done to God Almighty. Every wilful Sin is a Contempt of God's Authority, and a Means of spreading the same Contempt of him in the World; and in both these Respects, it is an Act of Hostility against God, for which Repentance is no *adequate Reparation*.

Neither is it possible for any *Creature* in our stead, to make a *full* and *perfect Expiation* for our Sins. Because the Sufferings of a *Creature* cannot be a *Satisfaction* for the innumerable Offences of all Mankind: Offences which are aggravated to an *infinite*

Degree, by the *infinite Dignity* of God, against whom they are committed.

Though we should suppose these Sufferings to be *voluntarily* undergone, yet they can no more *compensate* for the Indignity, or *repair* the Dishonour offered to God, than the Dignity of a *Creature* can be *infinite*, or *equal* to that of the *Creator*. There is the same Disproportion between the *Compensation* and the *Injury*, as there is between *God*, and a *Creature*. And yet it is hardly supposable, that *any Creature* should *voluntarily* suffer for the Sins of Mankind. He could not presume to do it of his *own Accord*; neither could God propose it to him, and decree it in *concert with him*. This were unbecoming the Majesty of God, and inconsistent with the *infinite Distance* between him and a *Creature*, how excellent soever we imagine it. And if God *appointed* any *Creature* to suffer for Mankind, and ordered that, in Consideration of his Sufferings, he should be *most highly exalted*; advanced in Dignity, and celebrated through the whole Creation; then, it was the *Duty* of that *Creature* to submit to the Appointment of his *Lord* and *Sovereign*, and his *Reward* would be a *full Compensation* for his Trouble; and consequently, there could be no *Merit* in his Sufferings; no *Worth* in them to *deserve* any thing for *other Creatures*, or to give them
any

any Claim upon God; much less such *high* and *inestimable Worth*, as to obtain *Pardon* and *Salvation* for a *whole World of Sinners*. So that *no Creature* could expiate the *Guilt*, and effect the *Redemption* of *Mankind*.

The *Scripture* teaches us, that none is *Saviour* but *God only*²; that, we are *saved in the Gospel-Dispensation* by the *Name of the Lord*; that is, by the *Person or Power of Jehovah*²; the *only Name*, and the *only God*.

² Is. xliii. 11.

xlv. 21.

Hos. xiii. 4.

² Joel ii. 32. See Dr. Knight's *Sermons*, p. 108, who has fully proved the following Particulars.

First, Christ is *Saviour* of the *World* in his own *Person*. *Sermon*, p. 204.

Secondly, To be *Saviour* of the *World* includes an *Idea of Divine Power*. For *Salvation*, on the part of the *Saviour*, consists in taking away the *Guilt* and *Dominion* of *Sin*; the *Tyranny of Satan*; the *Yoke of the Law*; and the *Power of Death*. But these Things cannot be done by *meer Man*. They require *Divine Power* to effect them. Therefore Christ as *Saviour* is a *Divine Person*, and he could not, unless he were so, be *Saviour*, p. 194, &c.

Thirdly, According to the *Old Testament*, *Salvation* is obtained under the *Gospel* by the *Name of the Lord*; [*Jehovah*] the *only Name*, and the *only God*, whom the *Nations* shall worship; for *there shall be one Lord, and his Name one*. Joel ii. 32. Zech. xiv. 9. p. 108.

Fourthly, According to the *New*, *Salvation* is obtained by the *Name of Jesus only*; as it is written; *There is no Salvation in any other. There is no other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved*. Therefore the *Name* of *Jesus* (that is, the *Person or Power of Jesus*; for *Name* stands for *Person* or *Power*, or *Thing* named) the *only Name*, whereby we must be saved, is the *Name of the Lord*, or the *one Name* spoken of by the *Prophets*; therefore *Jesus* is the *Lord*, or *Jehovah*, or *true God*, p. 107, 109.

whom the Nations shall Worship ^b; and that, the Name of *Jesus*, or *Saviour*, answers to *Emmanuel* ^c, or *God with us*. The Consequence of which is, that Christ *the Saviour* of the World is *Jehovah*, or truly God; and that otherwise he could not be *our Saviour*: He could not be truly styl'd by *St. Paul*, *the Author of eternal Salvation* ^d; nor could *St. Peter* say, that *his is the only Name under Heaven by which we must be saved* ^e.

It is the Doctrine likewise of the *ancient Fathers* ^f, that the *Son of God* could not have acted as *Saviour* and *Mediator*, if he had not consisted of *both Natures*, the *Divine* and *Human*. They understood Christ to be *Mediator*, as being *perfect God*, as well as *Man*: and they thought that we could not be reconciled, and united to *God*, but by One who was *himself true God*, and could, by being *incarnate*, join the *Divine* and *Human* Natures together ^g. They very much insisted upon this kind of Reasoning; and on this Account, They looked upon the *Divinity* of our blessed Lord, as an Article of the utmost Importance to *Salvation*.

It is evident therefore, that if Christ were

^b Zech. xiv. 9.

^c Mat. i. 21.

^d Heb. v. 9.

^e Acts iv. 12.

^f Dr. Knight's *Sermons*, p. 190. Dr. Waterland's *Second Defence*, p. 375.

^g Dr. Waterland's *Sermons*, p. 209.

a *Creature only*, he could not be our *Saviour*. He has not purchased by his Death a Covenant of *Salvation*. We are still *concluded under Sin*, as there is not a proper Satisfaction made for it. Our Faith and our Hopes in him, are vain and illusive; and the *Remission of Sins upon Repentance*, can't truly be preached to us in *his Name*^h. And for this Reason, among others, the *Arian Scheme* should be heartily detested, and most vigorously opposed. Because it hence appears to be a most *disconsolate Doctrine*; the most destructive of human Happiness that can be invented. For as it takes away the *Merits* of our Saviour's Sufferings, it takes away the *Ground* of our *Pardon*, and *Reconciliation*, and *Acceptance* with God: It leaves us in a State of Sin and Condemnation destitute of Relief; and it renders us *Strangers from any Covenants of Promise*, having no *Hope*, and *without God in the World*ⁱ: It tends in Consequence to fill us with Diffidence and Dread under a Consciousness of Guilt, and to drive us into Despair; a thing which would transform us into *infernal Spi-*

^h And yet he told the Apostles, Luke xxiv. Verses 46, and 47. that it was *written*, and accordingly *behoved him to suffer, and to rise again the third Day, and that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

ⁱ Ephes. ii. 12.

rits, and make this World *another Hell*; a Place of *Impiety* and of *Horror*; and therefore for the confirming of our Faith in the *Efficacy* of Christ's *Mediation*, it is requisite to believe his *essential Divinity*.

Lastly, The Belief of this Article is necessary to excite a due Sense of the *Divine Love* in his becoming our *Mediator*, and to engage us to acknowledge it with suitable Thankfulness.

As the Scripture most frequently and nobly celebrates the *Divine Love* in effecting our Redemption, so it places the *transcendent Height* of this Love, in the *Dignity* of the Person by whom we are redeem'd.

God commended his Love to us, says St. Paul, in that whilst we were Sinners, CHRIST died for us ^k.—The Kindness and Love of GOD our Saviour towards Man appeared, in saving us according to his Mercy^l.

Herein is Love, says St. John, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his SON to be the Propitiation for our Sins ^m.

God so loved the World, that he gave his ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life ⁿ.

In this was manifested the Love of God to-

^k Rom. v. 8.

^m 1 Joh. iv. 10.

^l Tit. iii. 4.

ⁿ Joh. iii. 16.

wards us, because that God sent his ONLY BE-GOTTEN SON into the World, that we might live through him °.

In which Passages, the exceeding *Great-ness* of the *Divine Love* is extolled on this Account, that *God the Son* was the Person by whom we are redeemed. The Love of the *Father* in sending him to save us, is most eminent and illustrious. For as God said to *Abraham* when he offered up *Isaac*, *By this I know thou fearest me, because thou hast not withheld thy Son, thy only Son from me*; so by this we perceive the unbounded Measure of the *Father's* Affection, because he *spared not his Son, his only Son*, but gave him up to die for our Sins. In like manner, the Love of the *Son* is equally conspicuous in his *submitting* to this Dispensation. For he *voluntarily* condescended to assume the *human Nature*; and to offer it up as a Sacrifice for Sin. He *vouchsafed* to veil his Divine Majesty under a covering of *Flesh*; and to humble himself still farther, in *becoming obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross*. His Humiliation was in all Respects stupendous, in its Degree, as well as its Manner. It was not a Fall from earthly Happiness, which is *chequered and fugitive*: It was not the Loss of a *temporal Crown*, which often presses the

• 1 Joh. iv. 9.

Royal Head it adorns ; but it was a Descent from *absolute unmixed Felicity* ; a Descent from the *celestial Throne* ; from the humble and cheerful Adoration of Cherubims and Seraphims : From the absolute Government of the Universe ; and it continued from his *Incarnation* to his *Death* : He passed with invincible Patience from one Degree of suffering to another ; till at length he was *brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter*, and closed the melancholy Scene with all the Aggravations of *Infamy* and *Torture* : And therefore as the Love of the *Father*, and the *Son* is infinitely heightened by the Dignity of the latter, we cannot have a due Sense, or proper Estimation of the *Greatness* of their Love, nor consequently acknowledge it as we ought, unless we believe his *essential Dignity*. So far as we derogate from his personal Excellence, so far we undervalue the *Divine Love* in the Act of Redemption, and prevent the Influence which it ought to have upon us.

So great is the Degree of Reverence and Thankfulness, which this marvellous loving Kindness requires of us, that it has been pleaded as an Argument of the *true Deity* of Christ. For if any *Creature* had been entrusted with the *great and endearing* Charge of redeeming us (supposing him capable of performing it) it might have engaged us to
higher

higher Expressions of Veneration and Regard, than can lawfully be paid to any Creature; engaged us to give him the Honour, which Scripture appropriates to God alone, and to fall into the like Idolatry which the Heathens were guilty of, with respect to their great Heroes and Benefactors; and therefore our Saviour is a Person of Divine Dignity, whom we cannot too highly esteem, or too thankfully adore; and whose Office cannot lead us to greater Esteem and Homage, than his essential Excellency warrants.

Such then being the *Degree* of Thankfulness and Love, which is due for our Redemption, let us not harden our Hearts against the Payment of it, by degrading our Redeemer, but firmly believe his true Divinity, and confess him with *St. Thomas* to be *our Lord, and our God*. If he vouchsafed, for our sake, to appear in the Likeness of Men, let not his Condescension be turned to his Disparagement, nor let Men especially, on whose Account he descended, undervalue him for so doing. This were to abuse and vilify him for his wonderful Kindness, and to make the Ground of our most hearty and devout Thanksgiving, an Argument against his Prerogative. The humble and pious Christian, who perceives the *unbounded Measure* of Christ's Love, will acknowledge and extoll it with *suitable* Gratitude; whilst he,
who

who through *the Strength of vain Philosophy*, denies the Godhead of his Saviour, must fall short of the just Tribute of Praise. The one cannot possibly exceed in his Expressions of Respect; nor the other fail of being

Dr. Waterland's 30th Query is, "Whether, supposing the Case doubtful, it be not a Man's part to take the safer Side; rather to think too highly, than too meanly of our blessed Saviour, &c.

And for the Affirmative he argues thus. "Our blessed Lord hath done great and wonderful Things for us. If our Respect, Duty and Gratitude happen, through our Ignorance and excessive Zeal to rise too high; this is the overflowing of our good natured Qualities, and may seem a pitiable Failing. But, on the other hand, if we happen to fall short in our Regards, there is not only Ingratitude, but *Blasphemy* in it. It is degrading and dethroning our Maker, Preserver, King, and Judge; and bringing him down to a Level with his Creatures.

"What must an *Arian* have to say, at the great Day, if it appears that he has been uttering *Blasphemies* against the Son of God, and reviling his Redeemer (the Generality of sober Christians looking on, all the while, with Horror, shocked at the Impiety, and openly declaring and protesting against it) and for no other Reasons in the last Result, but because he thought *Generation* implied *Disson*, and necessary *Generation* implied outward *Coaction*; and he could not understand whether the Unity should be called *Specifick* or *Individual*; nor how there came to be Three Persons; nor why One might not have been as good as Three; nor why the Father should be said to beget the Son, rather than *vice versâ*, and the like? Is this kind of Reasoning suitable to, or becoming *Christians*, who have their Bible to look into, which alone can give any Satisfaction in these Matters? To go upon our own Fancies and Conjectures, in a Thing of this Nature, is only betraying too little Reverence for the tremendous, and unsearchable Nature of God, and too high an Opinion of our own selves.

less thankful than he ought ; while he runs the utmost Hazard moreover, of *reviling* his Saviour, and *abusing* his Judge, instead of *magnifying* and *adoring* him.

Thus I have set before you the *Necessity* of believing our Saviour to be *truly* God. The Belief of this Article, is of the highest Importance to our *Salvation*. It is a *necessary Instance* of Respect to the *Veracity*, and of Obedience to the *Command* of God. It is *necessary* to warrant our *Religious Worship*, and keep it clear of *Idolatry*. *It is necessary* to confirm our Faith in the Truth of his Divine Mission, and to convince us of the Consistency, Piety, and Divine Inspiration of Scripture. *It is necessary* to assure us of the Efficacy of his Sufferings ; and to engage us to return *due* Thanks to him and the Father for our Redemption ; and therefore, *as it is necessary* in all these Respects, which are of especial Moment, we should resolve to *hold it fast without wavering*. We cannot otherwise, either perform the *Duties*, or preserve the *Hopes*, or secure the Advantages of our Christian Calling ; and the *with-holding*, or *parting with* this Belief, is much the same Thing in effect, as the *renouncing*, or throwing up Christianity altogether.

Neither is there any Thing pleaded by the *Arians*, which may justly incline us to depart from this Faith, *into which we have been baptized, and wherein we stand*. They

They have offered *nothing new* upon the Subject. They only *repeat* the Pretences, which have been considered, and rejected for their Weakness, *many hundred Years ago*. They put them indeed, Here and There, into a *new Dress*, to beguile the *Unwary*; but they are the same in *Substance* that their *Predecessors* advanced, and for which they were condemned by the Church: Neither is it possible for them to do more than *repeat*, unless they had some *fresh Evidences* on their Side, which were not before known in the *Christian World*.

They have been convicted of *a false Reports*, and *false Representations*; of *Disguises* and *Colourings*; and of various Methods of *Unrighteousness* and *Deceit*, in order to support their Cause. They have been exposed in all their Appeals to *Scripture* and *Antiquity*; and the

“ *Arianism* was at first promoted by *Wiles*, and *Artifices*,
 “ *Disimulation*, and *Disguises*, and cannot any where subsist
 “ without them. To this very Day the Patrons of it have no
 “ other Way left, but to conceal and cover its Deformity as
 “ much as possible; stifling of Evidences that make against
 “ it; misrepresenting the Truth of History; taking Advan-
 “ tage of *ambiguous Terms*; keeping off in *Generals*; not
 “ daring so much as to own the certain and inevitable Con-
 “ sequences of their Principles, hardly the *Principles* them-
 “ selves; not trusting either of them, to a fair, open, and
 “ regular Examination, but shrinking always from the very
 “ Point in Question; opposing, objecting, cavilling perpetu-
 “ ally against the *Orthodox Scheme*, but taking little, or no
 “ Care, either to *answer*, or so much as *mention*, the main
 “ Difficulties and Inconsistencies visible in their own. For
 “ the Truth of this, I appeal to all, who have been any
 “ thing curious Observers of the Rise, and Progress, and
 “ present State of this *Heresy* amongst us.” Dr. *Waterland's*
Sermons, p. 333. Dr.

the Charge of abusing *Both* in a shameful manner, by *wresting*, and *straining*, and *mangling*, has been made good upon them. Their very *Philosophy*, their *Confidence* and *Boast*, has been turned upon them, and it is Demonstration, that it can be nothing more, than *idle Conjecture*.

This being *undeniably* and *certainly* Fact, let it engage us to despise and reject the *Arian Scheme*, and to abide immoveably in the *true Catholick Faith*, which has stood the Test both of *Argument* and *Persecution*, and triumphed over all Opposition. Let us consider Those, who have gone before us in this Faith, a *noble Army* of *Saints*, *Martyrs*, and *Confessors*; of the *wisest* and most *judicious* Men; the *brightest* *Ornaments*, and most *eminent Lights* of the Church in *all Ages*. Let us reflect withal, that no Inconvenience can attend this Faith: It exposes us to no Danger of offending the Deity either in *Persuasion*, or *Worship*, or of degenerating into *loose* and *unchristian* Principles. Whereas in the *Arian Scheme*, there is no avoiding of *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*; of *Blasphemy* towards our Saviour,

Dr. Waterland also, in the *Conclusion* of his *Farther Vindication* of Christ's Divinity, mentions the *bad Arts* which the Patrons of *Arianism* are guilty of, to *disguise* and *give a Gloss* to their own Scheme, and to *blacken the Faith* received; and he observes, that, as to *Scripture*, they have ransacked the *Socinian* Stores for eluding the Catholick Interpretation of it; and as to the *Fathers*, they have *wrested*, and *strained*, and *mangled*; *misinterpreted*, and *mistranslated* them, and the like. *Farther Vindication*, p. 128.

and *Perjury* in respect of our *Baptismal Vow*, and it is certain, that a disparaging Notion of *Christ's Merits* arising from a low Idea of his Person, naturally produces a disparaging Notion of *Christianity itself*, and this prepares Men to set up *Human Reason*, or *Pagan Philosophy*, in Competition with it, as equally effectual to Salvation.

Let these Considerations be duly weighed, and they will determine us, I doubt not, through God's Blessing upon them, to continue stedfastly in the Belief of *Christ's essential Godhead*, and in the *Adoration* and *Obedience* due to him, as our *God* and *Redeemer*, contemning the *Oppositions of Science*, *falsely so called*, and looking for his glorious *Appearance from Heaven*, when he shall come with the utmost Majesty to judge the World, and shall approve, and invite his faithful Followers, to reign with Him for ever in Happiness and Glory.

28 II 58

F I N I S.

I have been thinking of you
 and of the many things you
 have done for me and for
 the church. I am sure that
 you will be able to do
 much more for us in the
 future. I am sure that you
 will be able to do much
 more for us in the future.